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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOLING IN TWO KINDERGARTEN SETTINGS

BY

©

NIWATRA KLAINATORN

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND
RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

FALL, 1987

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled CHILDREN'S PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOLING IN TWO KINDERGARTEN SETTINGS submitted by NIWATRA KLAINATORN in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of schooling from children's perspective. Through describing how the children made sense of their schooling experiences, it is hoped that adults will become more sensitive of the impact they have on the children they work with.

Qualitative research methodology was used to enable the researcher to become intimately familiar with two kindergarten programs that were developed on two different philosophical basis. After five months of observing and recording what was happening in each program, an entire month was spent delving into the children's perceptions of schooling using formal and informal interviews, stimulated recall, and picture drawing. The children's responses were analyzed in light of the researcher's understanding of the programs gained through extensive participant observation. Five themes emerged providing insight into how the children perceived their school experiences: freedom and control; emotional experiences; the teacher's roles; program components; and the children's roles.

"Freedom and control" describes different styles of using control and how the children reacted to those styles. "Emotional experiences" reveals the children's emotional reactions and how they were related to their learning experiences. "The teacher's role" describs how differently the children from each program perceived their teacher's roles as a kindergarten teacher. "Program components" explores how each component became meaningful to the children. "The children's roles" depicts how the children from each program perceived themselves as a kindergartener. The study shows that the teachers' whole being, such as their personality, beliefs, teaching approach, interactions with the children , expectations, and the way they presented themselves as role models have a great impact on the children's perceptions of their schooling. Moreover, many children showed observable characteristics which indicated the imitation of their teacher's inner qualities such as being loving and caring, having empathy, expressing feelings openly, using descriptive language, and trying to give reasons for the phenomenon they had observed.

Implications for teachers, teacher education and further research are also included.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Education for young children has always been of public concern. The idea of putting preschool youngsters into a school environment seems to stem from the belief that early learning and early experiences remain crucial to later development. Today we are still confused by the difficulties of determining what a program for young children should be like. Fontana (1984) discusses the difficulties in early childhood education as follows:

> The point is that once we have satisfied the basic biological needs of children (food, drink, shelter, affection and the like) anything else becomes a matter of opinion. Traditionalists argued that the child 'needs' discipline in order to develop his character, while the progressives argued today that he 'needs' free expression. To add to the confusion, the economists might well argue that the child 'needs' to become numerate and literate if he is one day to contribute significantly to our industrial survival. The conception of a child's needs depends very much on the sort of theories that one holds out for the kind of person the child could one day grow up to be.
>
> (Fontana, 1984, p. 4)

Research in early childhood education added to the confusion because of the contradictory nature of research designs emphasis. Hamilton (1983) has pointed out that educational research and practice based on the assumption that schools are only, or even predominantly, settings for academic learning are severely limited in value, as are research methods and teaching techniques that treat instruction as a primarily technical task. In trying to make sense of two contradictory evaluations of early childhood programs presented by the Westinghouse-Ohio University study and the Ypsilanti Perry Preschool project, Goodman (1982) provided an interesting viewpoint. While the Westinghouse study concluded that Headstart experience had very little, if any, accademic value for participating children, the Ypsilanti study concluded that preschool experience was indeed valuable. Goodman pointed out that because the two programs varied in form of content and were very different in their goals, no definite conclusions could be drawn from these studies and there remain many unanswered questions about early childhood programs. He pointed out that there were significant differences in approaches used by the two programs. The Ypsilanti study had very low teacher-pupil ratio, weekly home visits, and expert teachers recruited for their certification in preschool learning, while in contrast, the Headstart Program had fairly large pupil to teacher ratio, no regularly scheduled home visits, and few specially certified preschool teachers. This evidence might lead to the conclusion that numerous factors may be substantial for the effects of a preschool program in terms of education and well-being of the child.

Despite the abundance of research in early childhood education and the many changes in educational theories and practice that have taken place in recent years, most of this work has been done from adults' perspective. In recent years there has been a surge of interest in student thought and action as students engage in learning. The dissatisfaction with the process-product paradigm has caused a growing body of research about students' information-processing responses to instructional stimuli (Berliner, 1976; Doyle, 1977; Weinstein, 1983). Berliner (1976) pointed out, "Researchers do not know how much of what is called skill teaching is even perceived by the learner" (p. 10).

Studies in social cognition suggest that children are active interpreters of classroom reality. They draw inferences about the causes and effects of behavior and such inferences are not always rational, and children's views and adults' views of classroom reality are not necessarily synonymous (Weinstein, 1983). If education is to be truly responsive to children's needs, it is a challenge to uncover the children's understanding of classroom phemomena which influence their thinking about schooling. At present, we do not have enough research to answer the questions related to how children view approaches to education. Hartup (1979) suggests that our knowledge of this realm of experience is shockingly incomplete.

Purpose of the Study

The researcher wanted to understand the meaning of schooling from children's perspective and how they made sense of their schooling experiences. Of particular interest was the nature of the interactions that occurred among the teacher, the children, and the setting. The researcher wanted to come to understand what goes on inside the children in terms of how they feel, their needs, what they value, and the unique ways of what they perceive that influence them to behave as they do. Through learning more about the children's perceptions of schooling, it should be possible to better understand the impacts of different educational approaches on children and to shed some light on trends of program development in early childhood education.

Research Questions

This study was conducted in an attempt to find the answers to these research questions:

1. What impact do different styles of teaching have on the experiences and behaviors of the children?
2. What are the children's perspectives of schooling in different kindergarten programs?
    a. How do children's perspectives differ?

   b. How do they perceive the teacher's roles?
   c. How do the teacher's behaviors and expectations affect the children's perspectives of schooling?

3. How do the teacher's attitudes, characteristics, and interpretations contribute to the children having positive and/or negative perspectives of schooling?

Delimitation

The study was carried out in two different kindergarten classrooms with the researcher spending six months in each program as a participant observer. Through presenting thick descriptions of how the two kindergarten programs operated, and the children's reflections on their schooling experiences, the readers are given an opportunity to identify their own experiences with the ones described in this study and reflect upon them. The researcher's interpretation of what was happening in the study may be different from the readers's as our different beliefs and cultural backgrounds play an important part in shaping our perspectives toward reality. However, in as much as there are differences among us and between the two teachers in this study, none of us could deny the commonality we all share in our educational systems - the intention to do things in the best interests of the children. By accepting our differences and viewing the possibilities of what might be the effects of our practices, it is hoped that each reader will create greater sensitivity to the children's reactions to our educational approaches.

It was not possible to maintain the same role in the two programs when doing observations. The teacher in Program A insisted that there should be no note-taking during the observations and that the researchr should participate by working with the children as a teacher's helper. The researcher often supervised the children during recess time and worked with the children whom the teacher assigned to her when they needed individual attention. As such, the presence of the researcher in this program may influence the program environment differently from that of the other program.

The teacher in Program B preferred the researcher to observe and take notes while she was teaching. Although the researcher could work with any children during the center time, it was more strictly an observer's role rather than a teacher's helper role.

The teachers' ways of sharing information about their programs was considerably different. While Teacher B spent time discussing her philosophical background, Teacher A insisted that most information should be obtained by reading Steiner's writings. Therefore, the philosophical description of Program A was based on Steiner's writings and not necessarily reflected in practice, while the philosophical description of Program B grew out of the teacher's own interpretation of her practice.

Significance of the Study

Variables related to specific kinds of human behavior are so numerous that it is almost impossible to find which crucial variable is responsible for which kind of behavior (Goodman, 1982). Human beings are dynamic. New social patterns, new dimensions of introspection, and new morality gradually arise in this changing world. Thus it is impossible either to repeat any situations in human interaction or to use norm referenced research to explain the phenomena in classrooms regardless of the contexts in which each individual has reacted to the environemnt.

This study provids a detailed description of classroom or situational contexts of student perceptions of schooling. It also provides integration of student, teacher, and researcher views of classroom phenomena. As such, the global view of schooling for young children is presented.

It is the hope of the researcher that this study will not only offer some insights to the educators of young children but also be of significance in its methodological aspects. By uncovering knowledge about how the children perceived their school experiences, the naturalistic, qualitative approach used in this study may offer greater possibilities for gaining a deeper understanding of the existential reality of how those experiences became meaningful to the child. By respectfully letting the phenomenon "speak for itself" (Colaizzi, 1978, p.52), the deep meaning structures which exist beneath the surface world of young children's schooling were explored and disclosed.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Controversies in Early Childhood Education

The controversy between the respect for the child's natural growth process , including a desire to protect him from too early imposition of academic instruction, and the concerns for the effects of early learning on achievement in the subsequent years of schooling never fail to be issues in early childhood education. Some of the issues pointed out by Spodek (1984) are: (1) when children should start formal schooling; (2) the extent to which kindergarten experiences should include academic or preacademic content; (3) the extent to which early childhood education functions as an agent of social change; and (4) changing conceptions of knowledge and content in early childhood education.

Throughout the ages, some individuals have encouraged respect for the child's natural growth and his individuality as evidenced in the following excerpts:

> If we wish anyone to be virtuous we must train him in early youth; if we wish him to make great progress in the pursuit of wisdom, we must direct his faculties toward it in infancy, when desire burns, when thought is swift and when memory is tenacious.

> You have not got to teach him truths so much as to

> show him how to set about discovering them for himself.
>
> Idiosyncracies of the individual are the greatest blessing of nature and must be respected to the highest degree.
>
> (Plato, 1941, p. 72)
>
> Work and play are all one for him, his games are his work; he knows no difference. He brings to everything the cheerfulness of interest, the charm of freedom, and he shows the bent of his own mind and the extent of his knowledge.
>
> (Rousseau, 1911, p. 126)
>
> All instruction of man is then only the art of helping nature to develop her own way; and the art rests essentially on the relations and the harmony between the impressions received by the child and the exact degree of his developed power.
>
> (Pestalozzi, 1894, p. 90)
>
> Play is the purest, most spiritual activity of man at this stage, and at the same time, typical of human life as a whole - of the inner hidden natural life in man and in all things. It gives, therefore, joy, freedom, contentment, inner and outer rest, peace and the world. It holds all the sources that is good. A child that plays thoroughly, with self active determination, perseveringly until physical fatigue forbids will surely be a thoroughly determined man, capable of self sacrifice and others.
>
> (Froebel, 1887, p. 54-55)

These viewpoints which may still be found in practice at present were shaken when there was a search for science in education. Instead of viewing education as an art and growth as an individual unfolding process, norm referenced research has created divergent thinking about the nature of the child and the nurture that should be provided for his or her well-being. As Schmidt (1984) has pointed out:

> Ideas change over a long period of time. New

> notions, about how children develop exist side by side with old notions, and often there are contradictions that remain unresolved (p. 1).

The essence of the belief based on norm referenced research may be shown by the following excerpt:

> Louise Bates Ames, developmental psychologist and co-founder of the Gesel Institute of human developemnt in New Haven, Connecticut, dubs the age four as 'wild and wonderful.' Kindergarten teachers find these developmental 4-year-olds impulsive, distractive to themselves and others, hyperactive, emotionally explosive, lazy and dependent.
>
> (Hammond, 1986, p. 279)

Hammond (1986) described her 5-year-old son as a developmental 4-year-old who was socially and emotionally immature and lagging developmentally. She claimed that one third of the chronological 5-year-olds were the same as her son who had to be taken out of kindergarten and stayed out for a year for the sake of his well-being. The notion of simply labelling the children "not ready for school" because they deviated from the norm of the five-year-olds, denied the importance of kindergarten being a place to nurture the child in harmony with his nature with respect to individuality, and placed more emphasis on standardized tests, preparation for later schooling, and adult demands on children's expected behaviors.

Pressure on Early Academic Learning

Spodek (1984) has pointed out that a great deal of attention has been given in recent years to change in kindergarten programs, and concern for teaching academics or preacademics in kindergarten is extremely evident. He quoted a November 11, 1982 article in the New York Times, titled "Preschool Classes Stress Early Learning" as follows:

> While a wide variety of preschool programs still exist, the 1980's may see more and more kindergarteners poring over readers, workbook and ditto sheets. Pressure to cover academic subjects so early, most kindergarten teachers agree, is coming from anxious parents. Parental insistence on pre-first-grade reading program may stem in part from general mistrust of educational institutions (p. 7).

The most influential research findings that caused a great deal of concern about the effects of academics in early childhood education were in the field of reading. Many studies had been done to predict academic failure in reading at early age (Butler, Marsh, Sheppard, & Sheppard, 1982; 1985; Feshbach, Adelman, & Fuller, 1977; Pope, Lehrer, & Stevens, 1980; Satz & Friel, 1974, Sheppard & Sheppard, 1983). The researchers contended that students who were the poorest readers in the early years of primary school remained the poorest readers throughout their primary school years, and nothing in their school experience altered this situation. In the study by Butler, Marsh, Sheppard, & Sheppard (1985), children were traced over their first seven years of school, and the researchers concluded that measures collected in kindergarten accurately predicted reading achievement during their subsequence school years.

Another trend of research findings that caused concerns for academic learning in preschool years was from those concerning disadvantaged children. Recent research found that when tests were administered among the preschoolers from different ethnic groups, English-speaking children obtained higher scores than those from minority children (Reynolds, 1982). Arising from the belief that early childhood education could help children from disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve the opportunities for school achievement, early childhood education became the expected key to alleviate the visible differences in the level of school achievement between the children of the affluent and the children of the poor (Weber, 1984). Among the early childhood programs that put extreme emphasis on academic learning was that designed and operated by Bereiter and Englemann in 1966 (Evans, 1971). This program was run on the premise that "if a child is a year or more retarded in language and conceptual development at age four he needs to develop at twice the normal rate in order to compare favorably to his peers when they all reach five" (Evans, 1971, p. 104). Thus the program focused on accelerating the children's cognitive growth by formal teaching of language, arithmetic, and reading to children of four years old (Ahlfield, 1969).

The Effects of Preschool Education

There is controversy among the research on this topic. While some research strongly supports the notion of long-lasting effects of preschool education on children, others deny that there is any lasting effect. The earlier research about preschool effects showed that preschool education for disadvantaged children had caused gains of 5 to 6 points in IQ scores (Beller, 1965; Gray & Klaus, 1965). The study that rejected the effects of preschool education was conducted by Alpern (1966). He reported that the five-year-old children in both his experimental group and control group made substantial gains on the Metropolitan Readiness test. Another study conducted recently by Evans (1985) created further doubts about the effects of preschool education. He studied high school students, all from minority groups in an urban area, who had different types of preschool history. One experimental group comprised children who had attended an academically oriented preschool program. Another group had attended a traditional preschool program which emphasized social-emotional development. The control group had no preschool experience. The findings showed no general carry-over effect for measured school achievement, general behavior, or emotional development into the middle and senior high school years.

The interesting point that was made is that most studies about the effects of preschool in general, or differing approaches used in preschool programs, were narrow and based on the rigid assumption that the gains from preschool experience could be evaluated only by standardized measures of intelligence or school achievement. Although these evaluated cognitive ability, other aspects of development were not taken into consideration.

An outstanding study about the effects of preschool education is the one led by Weikart (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1985) in the Perry Preschool Project. The most important findings are that preschool education does have effects in long-term benefits such as: (1) it can cut later special education in half; (2) it can reduce retention rates, and (3) it can reduce the incidence of drop-out and teenage pregnancy. Another study by Gray, Ramsey & Klaus (1982) reported the same finding. A group of low-income Black children from a preschool project that emphasized both cognitive and affective development and was designed as a preacademic program with a strong affective development component were the subjects of this follow-through study project until they were 20 years old. The findings were: (1) the experimental children scored significantly higher on language achievement tests, but not on computation until the end of the fourth grade. Differences in achievement or affective development were not significant from the end of fourth grade through high school. However, the researcher found that experimental females were more likely to be in school and at the expected grade level, more had completed high school than members of the control group and were better at coping with adversity. For example, seven of eight high school students from the experimental group who became pregnant returned to finish high school, while only one of six from the control group returned.

Although there are controversies among the findings about the effects of preschool education on the children, some interesting points can be made from this research. If the effects of preschool were counted in terms of the gains of IQ scores, achievement, or reading test scores, good preschool programs were likely to have positive effects on children, but the effects were not likely to continue beyond the elementary grades. In high school, the possible effects were lower drop-out rates, grade retention, teenage pregnancy, and more life coping skills.

However, these studies used low-income minority children as the subjects of the studies. It is doubtful whether these findings could be applied to children from different backgrounds who were not socially disadvantaged. Our knowledge about this concept is still limited.

The Need to Look from the Child's Perspective

In much of the existing research on classrooms, we have tended to ignore the intelligence that children bring to this social situation. Researchers are just beginning serious investigations of the student point of view about classroom process (Weinstein, 1983). In early childhood education, programs have usually been evaluated from the adult's perspective of how positively they affect the children's well-being, assuming that the children's needs have been met if the programs are well designed and based on theoretical groundings that are accepted. If we regard the children with respect as individual beings, input from them should play a more important role. However, Brophy (1982) cautions us on using children's comments. Children's responses neither have the same meanings or connotations as they would have if made by adults; nor do children necessarily draw conclusions that adults would see as following logically from given perceptions. Thus knowledge that a particular perception would have a particular effect on an adult cannot necessarily be generalized to a child. A remarkable study as evidence to support what Brophy had cautioned was done by King (1979). In her study, kindergarteners' classroom perspectives were studied on the notion of work and play defined by the children. Contrary perspectives between the teacher and the children were disclosed as the researcher reported:

> The teacher believed that some academic work in the form of games and many of the art activities were examples of play while the children consistently described these activities as work. The teacher's definition of play seemed to include activities that were fun and creative; two characteristics that the children did not use to differentiate work from play.

The researcher concluded that:

> From the children's point of view, the lack of adult involvement seemed to be a necessary ingredient of play experiences in school. The definition of play is reserved for voluntary, unique and self directed activity on the part of the child. Moreover, the children's perspective does not indicate that they automatically assume work experiences to be tiresome.
>
> (King, 1979, pp. 85-86)

This study provided insights that added more complications to this already complex topic in early childhood education. What experiences we think are best for the children may not necessarily be in their best interests.

It appears that relatively little research in early childhood education has focused on children's reflections of their own experiences in schooling. To the knowledge of this researcher, there has been virtually no research done which focuses on uncovering the impact of different teaching approaches on children's perspective of their schooling at kindergarten level.

Two distinctly different teaching approaches were chosen to investigate in the present study. One program was based on Steiner's pedagogical philosophy, while the other was identified by the teacher as a literary approach. The following discussion will illuminate some of the basic tenets upon which each of these two programs was based.

Steiner's Pedagogical Philosophy

The Person

Dr. Rudolf Steiner was born in 1861 and graduated from the Vienna Technical University, where he pursued a scientific course of studies. While there, he helped maintain himself by tutoring in both scientific and classical subjects. He took charge of editing the comprehensive but lesser-known scientific works of Goethe, the great poet, and during this period he wrote his own philosophical works. One of these works, Truth and Science, he successfully submitted to the University of Rostock for his doctoral degree in philosophy. (Howard, in Edmunds, 1979). He put his philosophy into practice in 1919 when he formed the first Waldorf school sponsored by the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart, Germany. The school movement has since been called "Waldorf Education" or "Rudolf Steiner schools" (Kroeker, 1962).

The Philosophy

Steiner built his philosophy and pedagogy of education based on his observations from his own experiences and also from anthroposophy, the theory he had developed about spiritual science. Unlike many other educators, Steiner was involved with tutoring from the age of fourteen to support himself. His most dramatic experience was when he worked as a tutor for a family with four boys, one of whom was almost ten years old and hydrocephalic. He reported his experience as follows:

> When I went to live in the home, he had scarcely learned the most rudimentary elements of reading, writing and arithmetic. He was considered subnormal in his physical and mental development that the family had doubts as to his ability to be educated. His thinking was slow and dull. Even the slightest mental exertion caused a headache, lowering of vital functions, pallor and alarming mental symptoms.
>
> After I had come to know the child, I formed the opinion that the sort of education required by such a bodily and mental organism must be one that would awaken the sleeping faculties....
>
> I had to find access to the soul, which was as it were, in a sleeping state, and which must gradually be enabled to gain the mastery over the bodily manifestions.... I was thoroughly convinced that the body really had great mental capacities, though they were then buried...
>
> This educational task became to me the source from which I myself learned very much. Through the method of instruction which I had to apply there was laid open to my view the association between the spiritual, mental, and bodily man.
>
> (Steiner, 1951, p. 18)

The hydrocephalic condition graudually diminished, and later on this boy was able to attend high school, university, and became a medical doctor.

Through personal experiences, his philosophy of life and his sharp and thorough observations of human nature, he generated his principles of pedagogy based on his theory, Anthroposophy. According to this theory, before we become earthly persons in a physical body, we are all beings of spirit in a spirit world. When the spirit comes to the physical body inherited from the parents, the physical body becomes its expression, and in this body an entirely human organism is formed (Steiner, 1982c). Steiner believes that a human being, in his essential nature, possesses three aspects. He calls these three aspects Body, Soul, and Spirit; but he warns us not to attach to tnese terms any previously conceived meaning. According to Steiner, the body is that which the human being can perceive with his senses, like any object whatever belonging to the external world. On the other hand, his soul-existence is his own world, accessible to no sense observation. Through the spirit, however, the external world became manifest to him in another way: the knowledge that the spirit brings to him is independent of the emotions of his soul, his pleasure or displeasure (Unger, n.d.).

Education, according to Steiner's theory, means to give nourishment to the process of the holistic growth of the child, which means the body, the soul, and the spirit. The teacher must fully understand the nature of the child's body, soul, and spirit so that he or he can provide appropriate nourishment.

Early childhood education or, according to Steiner, the education during the first seven years of life, is very important as it is fundamental to the other stages of life. Steiner explains why the nature of the child in early childhood needs to be taken into consideration for planning any educational experiences for him or her in terms of his theory, Anthroposophy, which is based on a belief in reincarnation. The actions of man in one life become the destiny of the next life. Thus the physical body inherited from the parents and the spirit which brings with it the fruit of the previous life are working together to form an entirely human being. Two forces take part in the process: one is what he brings with him by the union of spirit self and consciousness soul which come to vitalize the body; and the other is what he assimilates from the matter and substance of the earth which becomes the influence of the environment on the growing person. These two forces combine in their effect upon the physical body. Therefore, the child at this period of life has already pre-formed talent and wisdom from previous lives, but only in a dreamy state, not yet fully awakened in conciousness, because the spirit is still only loosely connected with the physical body. (Steiner, 1982b). In Steiner's words:

> This being of spirit and soul who comes down from the spiritual world - a being quite as real as the one who proceeds from the mother - is more loosely connected with the physical body than is the case later on in human life. This is the reason why the child lives to a far greater extent outside his body than a grown-up man.
>
> (Steiner, 1982b, p. 35)

Thus during the first seven years of age, the child lives in the environment with his freer spiritual nature. All the environmental impressions are absorbed through the receptive organs and mingle into his soul. This means that all the development proceeds from the nerve-senses system. The nerve-senses system permeates the whole organism; and all impressions of the outside world affect the whole organism, work right through it (Steiner, 1975). The child not only learns through his whole being, but also is capable of sensing the spirituality inherent in the adult and allowing this to flow into him. From this process, another being is building itself up on the basis of the model given to human beings by heredity. The soul, which merely receives sensations, called sentient soul, is gradually modified by his spirit which gains the power it drawns from its own depths and also from the environmental stimuli brought to it, and becomes the thinking soul, called the rational soul. When the soul and spirit set themselves more firmly in the new being, the child then stops being the sense organ letting everything from the environment vibrate in himself. Steiner theorizes that, by this time, the child's being is coming gradually out of the dream stage and entering into that of the "will" (Steiner, 1982b). Steiner's suggestion for the education of children in the early childhood age is that the child should be allowed to remain as long as possible in the peaceful, dreamlike state of childhood mind. Any intellectual stimulation given to the child too soon will harm the soul. Steiner pointed out.

> Never forget that in the period round about the change of teeth the child passes over into the age of imagination and fantasy. It is not the intellect but fantasy which fills his life at this age.
>
> (Steiner, 1975, p. 24)

Steiner theorizes that whatever is done well or ill to a child at its earliest age will reappear in the grown person as faculties or failings, health or disease (Steffen, in Steiner, 1975). As such, teachers of young children bear great responsibilities for equipping themselves with understanding for the child, a true insight into human nature and the effects of what type of immediate environment would do to the child, in order to avoid damaging the child's whole course of life. Steiner warned teachers about all aspects that should be taken into consideration in educating young children. Here is an example:

> Extreme care must now be taken in the cultivation of these two faculties. As far as memory is concerned the child must be left entirely to itself. It is still an imitative being and as such it must on no account be troubled with memory exercises and such like. Otherwise it may be damaged for life. If research is carried far enough it will reveal that the tendency to arterial scerosis and rheumatism which comes on about the fortieth year is due to premature overloading of the memory. Once more, experience will verify this assertion.
>
> (Steiner, 1975, p. 4)

Steiner explains the threefold division of childhood and youth in this way: Up to the change of teeth man has a desire to imitate; up to puberty he longs for authority to look up to; after this time he wants to apply his own judgment to the world (Steiner, 1964). There are three different aspects about the world the child at each stage perceives. Before seven years of age, the child lives with the assumption that the world is moral. Because the child's spirit is still loosely connected to his inherited body and is still adjusting to it, he is still filled with the devotion that one develops in the spiritual world. Steiner says that it is for this reason that the child gives himself up to his environment by imitating the people around him. Thus the environment suitable for the child of this age should follow the child's unconscious assumption that the whole world is of a moral nature. The environment should best shape the life of a child so that he may imitate his surrounding in the best possible way.

From seven years of age to the time of adolescence, the child's spirit and soul have already metamorphosed into his body and he continually lives in the present. He seeks to enjoy the world, and proceeds on the unconscious assumption, namely that the world is beautiful. The environmental education for him should focus on enhancing the child's beautiful feelings toward the world. All education in this period of life should be geared toward awakening in a child pure, beautiful feelings for authority so that he will gradually and truly learn to respect the equal rights of people when he becomes an adult.

After the child has reached puberty, he starts to develop the right and inward concept of truth and the concept that the world is true. Education should begin to assume a scientific character which involves systematic approaches and modes of inquiry. Universal human love or brotherly love should also be enhanced accordingly, so that his economic life when he becomes adult is constructive.

The teacher's role in this program is not to educate the child for the age of childhood but to lay the influential groundwork for the rest of the child's whole earthly existence. The whole of the teacher's being is influential to the child. The teacher's feelings and will become part of the child's spiritual growth. Everything the child absorbs into his rhythmic life becomes seeds which grow cumulatively in the child. Steiner says:

> For indeed we do not only educate the child for the age of childhood , we educate him for his whole earthly existence, and even, as we shall see later, for the time beyond.
>
> (Steiner, 1982c, p. 23)

From Steiner's viewpoint, it is essential that the child should experience the condition of wonder before he or she begins to think. He contends that "a thinking which is set in motion without a condition of wonder remains nothing but a mere play of thought" (Steiner, 1975, p. 99). Thus sensory activities are considered important for children to give them a sense of wonder which effectively awakens their feelings and then leads to thinking. He pointed out:

> Hence it is actually a matter of coming to realise how in a young child, up to the seventh year, nerve-senses activity, rhythmic breathing and circulation activity and the activity of movement and metabolism are everywhere interplaying:- only the nerve-sense activity predominates, it has the upper hand; and thus the nerve-senses activity in a child always affects his breathing. If a child has to look at a face that is furrowed with grief, this affects his senses to begin with; but it reacts upon the matter of his breathing, and hence in turn, upon his whole movement and metabolic system.
> (Steiner, 1975, p. 41)

Because the child's feelings are the most important aspect to be nurtured, Steiner emphasizes that it is essential for teachers to develop sensitivity in their relationships with children. They should be sensitive enough to feel reactions in the child and be able to observe how the child reacts to activities. Teachers must also learn to read the effects of their own educational actions on the inner being of the child, not just on the surface level as from rote learning or intellectual recitation. In this process, each teacher brings into harmony his or her individuality and that of the child.

According to Steiner's philosophy, teachers' attitudes toward the growing child is basic to this educational method. Teachers must have respect for the child as the divine spiritual being transferring from the pre-earthly life with preformed individuality and wisdom (Steiner, 1982b). Each teacher has to look more deeply into the child's inner being and sense every effect the environment has on the growth process. Teachers have to respect the child's freedom by providing an environment in which children can experience freedom through the understanding of their own being. To do so requires the teacher to withold imposing ready-made abstract concepts which will impair the child's early development through will and feeling.

The teacher is the most important element in the educational process in this program. Steiner emphasizes that "the teacher should not only be able to love the child but to love the method he or she uses, to love his or her whole procedure - to love teaching, to love educating, and love it with objectivity" (Steiner, 1975, p. 43). Absorbing from the teacher's whole being, the child develops an aesthetic sense of pleasure or displeasure toward the world and morality.

Steiner gives more credit to the teachers' wills to understand children, to refine their own personality to be a good model to the children, and to adapt their own approach to the nature of the personality of each individual child, than credentials from institutional training. In his own words:

> Suppose I have a pale child in the school. A pale child should be an enigma to me, a riddle to be solved...I may perhaps come to see that I have given the child too much to learn by heart. I may have worked his memory too hard. If I do not admit this possibility, if I am a short-sighted teacher, having the idea that a method must be carried through regardless of whether the child grows rosy or pale thereby, that the method must just be persevered with, then the child will remain pale.
> (Steiner, 1975, p. 18)

The Literary Approach to Teaching Young Children

Literature is defined by Huck (1979) as "the imaginative shaping of life and thought into the forms and structures of language" p. 4. Graves (1983) pointed out the importance of literature in the lives of children, as it provides "drama, problem solving and precise language" (p. 67). However, selections of literature are used in classrooms mainly to involve children in the reading process rather than to enhance sense-making or meaning-making experiences for young children (McConaghy, 1986). McConaghy contends that there is a great potential in literature as a learning medium.

> Literature is not created primarily for learning how to read and write, to decode words and read for information, although reading literature can serve as a valuable means of accomplishing this end. Rather, literature is written by people who wished to shape their experiences aesthetically through narrative writing. Authors of children's literature usually write because they have a story to tell and they want to tell it. We can learn many things through the experience of reading stories; we can learn about ourselves and the significance of our own lives, and we can broaden our horizons to see worlds different from our own.

> I discovered that even very young children can begin to learn these things through reading literature.
>
> (McConaghy, 1986, p. 2)

The only literature about teaching young children that describes how a teacher uses literature as a central core of the whole curriculum is reported by McConaghy (1986). She spent three years conducting a study about her own grade one students experiencing a literature based approach she was using. Her approach involved "the environment that stressed the importance of the human context in which the child is learning. It emphasizes an atmosphere where children's feelings and ways of thinking are valued, and where their individual personalities and development are taken into consideration" (p. 38). She organized her classroom experiences through an integrated day: learning was not divided into separate subject areas, and a number of play-based learning centers were set up to allow for individual and group learning experiences. Having the children work in small groups, sharing their feelings and ideas, was considered an important learning experience with all literature playing a central role throughout the day. Here is an example of a day's agenda.

Morning Agenda

1. Sharing - announcements and calendar
2. Meet together for story and planning
3. Printing

4. Choose books for reading
5. QRT (quiet reading time)
6. Meet together - shared reading - story
7. Class activity
8. Centers
9. Lunch time

Afternoon Agenda

10. Story time
11. Reminder: return library book today
12. Journals
13. Meet together - story and planning
14. Centers
15. Clean-up time
16. Chapter 8 of The Adventures of Fingerling
17. Author's chair (children read stories written by themselves to class)
18. Au revoir

McConaghy reported that:

> This study of children's experiences with reading and writing literature illustrates how even very young children "created and recreated" their worlds. The literature provided children in my classroom with the means of exploring the things in their world, for example, examining their values ("I don't think it's right to trick people, even a wolf"); to engage in problem solving (I'd get an axe and chop down all the plants"); to build meaning ("that story reminds me of when I go to the doctor's office."); and to begin to understand some of the complexities of human nature ("that's because we all have a different mind and a different imagination"). (p. 134-135)

The unique technique McConaghy used in her literary approach was based on intensive verbal interactions between the teacher and the children as well as among the children themselves. The emphasis was to encourage the children to feel free to accept an aesthetic stance to reading and to express their personal responses to literature in various forms such as dialogues, role playing, arts and crafts, and writing. She commented that children needed opportunities to engage in dialogue, to interact with each other, and to use language for learning. She believed that, in the early years of school, children need more time for reading aesthetically than for reading for information. Moreover, children should have opportunities for choices and planning in the things they do. The learning environment involved not only the physical spaces in the classroom but, more important, the people in the classroom and the way they presented themselves to each other.

It is noticeable that even though McConaghy used literature as a means to literacy, her emphasis was not just to teach the children to read and write. Her emphasis was on the warm, supportive classroom atmosphere that allowed each individual child to grow at his or her own pace toward becoming a reader, a writer, and a thinker. Other researchers such as Clarke (1976) and Hickman (1983) also agree on the importance of the environment on the children's ability to learn. Clarke (1976) studied the characteristics of young fluent readers and pointed out that most of them "seem to develop their early skills in oral language, in reading and writing, in a warm, accepting and non pressured environment where parents were guided by their child's interests" (p. 48). Hickman studied children's responses to teachers teaching literature and concluded that:

> Children acquired verbal as well as nonverbal response strategies from their teachers. Several primary-age readers were observed practicing the techniques of sharing picture books, reading aloud to nonexistent audiences in the story corner. Older children adopted question and answer strategies when asked to tape response in pairs, using their teacher's intonation as well as typical vocabulary.
>
> Whether or not they were totally conscious of it, teacher wielded a great deal of power over children's responses to literature...teachers influenceed both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the responses expressed by children.
> (Hickman, 1983, p. 12)

When Hickman (1981) did her study about children's response to literature in an elementary school setting, she studied 90 children ages five to 11 from kindergarten to grade five. Her data did not suggest that younger children had the capacity to engage in discussions that went beyond the story or to develop question and answer strategy in response to literature. This was contrary to what McConaghy (1985) had found in her study. McConaghy argued that the reason Hickman (1981) could not find that younger children were adept in literature response while she could was because Hickman was an outside researcher. There was less opportunity for Hickman to establish an atmosphere of intimacy and trust with the children while McConaghy was able to do so as a classroom teacher doing her research in her own classroom. Because there is very little related research about literature based programs (McConaghy, 1985), it is challenging to find out whether it is the teacher's personality, her beliefs in children's capacity to learn, her teaching approach, or the nature of the program itself that enhances the children's potential to respond to literature and learning.

Although the literary approach model designed by McConaghy had some similar components to that used by the teacher in this study, it was not likely that they borrowed ideas from each other. The teacher in this study developed her program after she received her master's degree in 1982, which was before McConaghy started her research. However, McConaghy's work is presented here to illustrate the important role literature can play as a means to educate young children.

CHAPTER III

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is an exploratory study conducted in two kindergarten classrooms based on different philosophical orientations. The researcher sought to collect data that would describe and, through interpretation, show how children were experiencing their kindergarten year. Program A was based on the theory generated by Rudolf Steiner which emphasizes a stress-free educational environment for young children so that they experience inward joy through their growth and creative life as a child. All areas of academics for young children such as pre-reading and writing skills, inquiry skills, and numeral skills were considered not appropriate for kindergarten children, as these are for fulfilling adult expectations to meet society's needs rather than meeting the needs and nature of the children at this age. Program B was academically oriented, and was based on the assumption that children would learn best if information and experiences were presented in a simple, recognizable form. In this program literature was used as a means for the children to relate to and make sense of their environment and, as a growing human being, enjoy the love for learning.

The Research Settings

The research settings were two kindergartens in two public elementary schools in a large urban center.

Program A

Program A aimed at helping the children to develop human qualities that would lead to a full, decent life. All aesthetic values, including the love for nature, were considered important. Technology such as computers, television, and so forth were not valued as proper for young children because they prohibited the growth of creativity and imagination in the child. The children were supposed to be kept in the landscape of childhood under protection from stress and strain. Their innocent and beautiful minds would be educated by an environment that reinforced the beauty of their imaginative and creative minds by presenting poems about nature, nature stories, fairy tales and artistic activities such as drama, painting, and craft work. A teacher's warmth, loving care, and modeling were essential in this program.

Program B

Program B aimed at helping the children to develop a love for learning. The children were encouraged to explore their abilities and the environment around them. All kinds of media such as books, television, movies, and magazines were considered an integral part of the growing-learning process for the children. The children were believed to do better in their lives if they saw themselves as competent human beings who built up their own strengths by interacting with challenging environments, who came to appreciate the cultures they came from, and who enjoyed the freedom to set and achieve their goals for themselves. Human consciousness and understanding about life were encouraged by exposing the children to literature of various types that were rich in values, information, imaginative elements, entertainment and food for thought.

The Respondents

The respondents in this study were both the teachers and the children. Their actions, reactions, and interactions were carefully observed, recorded, and analyzed to find the emergent relationships between each other. However, the main purpose of the study is to focus on the children's perspective of what was happening.

The Teachers

The teachers in the study had the same amount of experience working in kindergarten, were both in the same age group, and had taken their teacher training from institutions in both Canada and Europe. Both were hard-working and devoted to their careers, spending time even during evenings and weekends preparing materials, arranging their classroom environment, and visiting parents in their homes.

Teacher A The teacher in Program A was a slim, tall woman with a quiet voice and short hair. She frequently wore cool shade color outfits with wool knee-high socks. Her interactions with the children seemed to be rather formal. Although she seldom joked with or teased the children, nor gave them affectionate hugs, she was pleasant with them. The children did likewise with her. She sometimes showed her temperament through her eyes when she was upset, but usually kept her voice calm.

Teacher B The teacher in Program B was lively and outgoing with long hair. She wore a variety of fashionable outfits, jewelry, and hair styles. She was very intimate with the children, often teasing them, making jokes, and giving them hugs, kisses, and compliments. The children did likewise with her. They often expressed admiration of her clothes, her hair, her jewelry, and often shared with her their personal problems such as sickness and conflicts in their families. She did not conceal her temperament from the children, but always explained why she became upset.

The Children

Children in Program A There were 16 children in this program which was a morning kindergarten. They all came from white English- speaking families. The children seldom made a lot of noise, even when the teacher was not around.

They tended to be imaginative, although the themes in their imaginative play were rather repetitive. The children seldom mentioned their personal problems in class, but rather talked about what they had seen or done, or other pleasant things.

Children in Program B There were 25 children in Program B which was an afternoon kindergarten. The teacher reported that some came from non-English speaking families and had learned to speak English in this class. The children were active and made a lot of noise when the teacher was not around. They also had arguments and squabbled quite often partly because of the crowded classroom. They often brought up the issues of family problems in class or talked privately with the teacher about them. They talked about their strengths such as new words they could read and new things they could do. Many of them seemed to like challenges and setting their goals high such as wanting to do more work, more difficult work, and in different ways.

Choice of Research Paradigm

This study followed the qualitative research paradigm, as the characteristics of this type of research fit well with the nature and purpose of this study. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), qualitative research has the characteristics presented below:

1. Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data, and the researcher is the key instrument.

This researcher felt that it was important to spend a considerable period of time in the kindergartens in this study, so that her inquiry would diverge rather than converge as more and more was perceived. The researcher became the main data gathering instrument in the study in order to "gain greater flexibility and the opportunity to build upon tacit knowledge, a feature that paper-and-pencil or physical instruments can never have" (Guba, 1981, p.7).

2. Qualitative research is descriptive.

It is impossible for the researcher to share the children's feelings, perceptions, and attitudes without giving the readers in-depth descriptive information of what had happened to cause them to react to their environment the way they did. The descriptive analysis helps both the researcher and the readers put together the parts derived from all sources of data and gain some insights on the issues under investigation.

3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products.

This researcher did not aim to use the findings from this study to generate a theory or propositions, but rather as a means to understand how and why the phenomena under investigation occurred the way they did. The generalization could be used only when the contexts fit (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As such, the researcher was more concerned to find out how the children perceived their experiences rather than what they perceived.

4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.

This study was not grounded in the existing theories nor trying to test any hypotheses that were set prior to the study. It focused on what was happening in both kindergartens, the differences as well as the similarities. Thus the data were inductively analyzed, and only the existing relationships of the phenomena emerging from the data were considered relevant to the study.

5. Meaning is of essential concern.

The purpose of this study was to find out how the children make sense of their kindergarten experiences. Thus the meanings that the children held in their minds were the focal points of this study rather than the surface meanings identified from an adult view point. The research techniques utilized in this study to elicit the children's reflections on the meanings of the experiences they held in their minds are discussed in the next section.

The decision to use a qualitative research paradigm for this study had been made on the grounds of "best fit" as described above. The design of the methods for collecting data, research technique and how the data were analyzed was an emergent one "which is never complete until the inquiry is arbitrarily terminated as time, resources, or other logistical considerations may dictate" (Guba, 1981, p. 7-8).

Methods of Collecting Data

A number of kindergartens in a large urban center were visited, and two programs that were using teaching approaches based on different philosophical basis and were chosen. A pilot study had been carried out in a traditional kindergarten where various techniques were tried to gain information on how the children viewed their kindergarten experiences.

The Pilot Study

The pilot study was carried out prior to the major data gathering period in a traditional kindergarten program. At this time a wide range of procedures designed for data gathering were tried out. The results were that many of the designed procedures had to be modified and abandoned. For example, puppets were initially used to elicit the children's responses about their schooling experiences. The children did not respond well to playing with the puppets using schooling themes as requested. The puppet activities were then dropped as a suitable procedure for eliciting children's responses about their schooling experiences. During the pilot study period, many interesting points were found that helped the researcher understand more about how to reach out for information from young children. For example, the data from the observations and the data from picture stimulated recall did not correspond. David, who was very restless when the teacher was talking during center time, responded to the picture of this activity by saying that he liked to listen to the teacher. This led me to be careful not to rely solely on the children's words for meanings without consulting the other sources of data. Some children tended to give the verbal responses they thought adults expected to hear, or that met the criterion of "being a good child" rather than expressing their own feelings. Moreover, when the children were tape-recorded, they tended to be conscious about "talking right" rather than expressing their real feelings or perspectives. This led to cutting back on some of the audio-taping in the children's parts in the study.

Scheduling

After obtaining permission from the teachers, the principals, and the School Board, six months from January to June 1985 were spent gathering data. Although both teachers had two kindergarten classes, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, Teacher A preferred the researcher to observe only the morning class. Teacher B informed the researcher that both of her kindergarten classes were similar and she would not mind if either one of them were chosen for the study. Therefore, the researcher visited Program A in the morning and Program B in the afternoon.

Phase I This phase lasted for three months, from January to March. During this phase, the researcher focused on developing rapport with the informants; gaining a holistic view of each classroom's phenomena; developing and refining research tools such as the sets of pictures for the picture stimulated recalls, questions for the formal interviews, and developing themes for specific observations. Each program was alternately visited on a weekly basis.

Phase II This phase lasted for three months from April to June. In order to gain a range of experience and understand the consequences of some particular events that were pertinent to the study, each program was visited on a daily basis so that the researcher could maintain rapport and spend time with individual children, eliciting their responses to the researcher's formal and informal interview questions from themes that arose during phase I. The children's drawings of their program were discussed, and pictures taken during phase I were used for stimulated recall.

Research Techniques

Participant observation.

Observations in this study were focused more on what the respondents did and said and the contexts in which the actions had been taken. The nature of observations carried out in this study fell into the category of participant observation as characterized by a period of intense social interaction between the researcher and the respondents in the milieu of the latter. As a participant observer, the researcher attempted to establish rapport with the respondents and to be honest about research purposes without affecting the behavior of the respondents (Genishi, 1982). Bogdan and Bilken (1982) emphasized that the observers should participate in the respondents' activities, make an attempt to learn from the respondents, but in some way remain detached. Bodan and Bilken recommended that participant observers should

> unobtrusively keep a written record of what happens as well as collect other forms of descriptive data. They attempt to learn from the subject but do not necessarily be like the subjects. They may participate in these activities but on a more limited basis and they do not compete for prestige or status.
>
> (Bodan & Bilken, 1982, p. 119)

The researcher spent as much time as she could doing activities with the children such as playing with them during recess and free play, helping them when they needed help during center time, and being the teacher's helper during teacher directed activities when requested by the teachers. This allowed the researcher to be close to the respondents so that she could cultivate an empathetic understanding of the children and teachers. By being close to the respondents and gaining their trust, the researcher sought to discover the meaning structures that determined much of the children's overt and covert behaviors, how they developed, and how they influenced their behaviors. The methods of recording the researcher's observations were as follow.

a. Field notes

Although it is suggested that field notes be written while the observer is in the field as the events occur (Spradley, 1979), it was not always possible when the researcher was participating in activities with the respondents. The researcher kept a notebook for each program, in which she either recorded observations at the time or did so as soon after the events as possible. The researcher sometimes left the classroom for a short break to dictate important information she had into a tape recorder to be transcribed later.

b. Tape-recorded transcriptions

The researcher frequently audio-taped teacher directed activities in both classrooms. Because of a great deal of noise distraction, child directed activities were selectively audio-taped when possible. All audio-tapes were transcribed and analyzed to find emergent themes and also as references when the researcher reflected about her observations.

c. Field journal

The researcher kept a field journal for each program reflecting on what she had observed as well as on information transcribed from the tapes. This helped the researcher to have "self-dialogues" about what she perceived from her observations.

Interview

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) have defined an interview as "a purposeful conversation, usually between two people that is directed by one in order to get information" (p. 135). Interviews enabled the researcher to acquire a deeper understanding of the situation. Although the topic of investigation was on the children's perception, the teachers were frequently interviewed so that the researcher gained insights as to the reasons the teachers acted as they did, as well as to discover how the children perceived and reacted to what the teachers did. During the interviews, the researcher tried to maintain the role suggested by Lofland (1971), that of being friendly and supportive and refraining from being judgmental about what the respondents had said.

Two types of interview were used in this study:

informal interview and formal or structured interview. The informal interview included questions posed to the teachers and the children during opportune moments throughout the day. The questions usually arose when substantial events occurred of which the researcher wanted to gain a deeper understanding. The range of this type of interview varied from casual chats to direct open-ended questions to encourage the children to reflect on whatever they felt about the situation.

Although Spradley (1979) suggests that researchers should avoid predetermined and prestructured questions so that the children can speak for themselves in their own words, it was necessary to validate the researcher's interpretation of her observations by posing specific questions. The prestructured questions used in the formal interviews were derived from the analysis of the informal interviews for the scope and content for further questions to ask the children about their overall perceptions of schooling. The questions were constructed in a way that encouraged both specific and general comments. For example, the children were asked what they felt about their own kindergarten and also any kindergarten in general. When asked about general kindergarten, the children had a chance to project into their answers their views of themselves or the teacher in relation to the particular situations based on their past experiences. This allowed the children to express freely their viewpoints and the researcher to find out what was really meaningful to the children.

The questions used in the structured interview for the children were as follows:

a. What is best in your kindergarten?
b. What do you like best about Miss A/Mrs.B.?
c. What are the things you see in your classroom that you really like there?
d. Why do kids come to kindergarten?
e. What do you learn in your kinderarten?
f. What could we do to make a good kindergarten?
g. What should a teacher do to be a good kindergarten teacher?

The formal interviews were conducted during the weeks of June, the final month of the data gathering period. These questions were posed to each individual child who spent time with the researcher alone during their free play period in Program A, and center time in Program B. The responses were recorded by audio taping and note-taking.

In order to gain more insight into why the programs were operated as they were and to check the researcher's interpretation of her observations, a structured interview was arranged with each teacher in the study. The interviews consisted of a request to explain the following.

a. her philosophy in teaching kindergarten;

b. her approach in teaching kindergarten children;

c. her reasons for doing specific things in her approach.

Although the interviews with the teachers were formal in the sense that the topics were prestructured, they were conducted as an informal conversation, allowing the respondents to freely speak for themselves about what they felt and believed. The interviews were recorded by both audio-taping and note-taking, so that in case of some mistakes with the audio-recording, the researcher still had important information derived from note-taking.

Stimulated recall.

Stimulated recall has been successfully used to stimulate the respondents to reflect on events and share their feelings about what was happening (Marland, 1977; Mireau, 1980; Tuckwell, 1980). The process these researchers used involved the researchers and the respondents viewing video taped events they had been involved in. Marland (1977) suggested that if the respondents have been informed of the purpose of the recall, it will help to ensure their full cooperation. Tuckwell (1980) suggested that filming from the respondents' vantagepoint will provide more cues to them and might facilitate more accurate recall. However, Taylor (1983) cautioned that the children may be influenced in their responses to an adult by the very presence of the adult who controls the conversation as part of the research role.

In this study, instead of using the traditional method of video-recording, photographs of classroom events were used as stimuli for the respondents. It was assumed that, when seeing the photographs of their own classroom, the children would spontaneously reflect their own perceptions, values, and attitudes by talking about themselves, their teacher, their friends, and the impressions they had about their program.

During phase I of data gathering, the researcher took photographs of whatever happened in each kindergarten; this yielded 354 photographs. These were classified into two categories: teacher directed activities and child directed activities; and a number of photographs were selected to represent each category for each program. Fourteen photographs representing teacher directed activities and 16 representing child directed activities were eventually selected. These photographs were put in two different envelopes according to the pertinent category.

The researcher administered the picture stimulated recall by spending time alone with the individual child during recess and free choice activity time, presenting the child two envelopes of the selected photographs. The envelope containing photographs of child directed activities was presented first, and the child was invited to see the photographs inside. The researcher explained to the child that she could not give the photographs away, but, if the child was allowed to keep only five pictures from this envelope, which ones he or she would feel happy to keep. After the child had selected the photographs he or she wanted to keep, the researcher initiated conversations about each picture, letting the child talk as much as he or she wanted about each picture, and finally asked the child why each particular photograph made him or her happy. After the child had finished, the photographs about teacher directed activities were presented and administered exactly in the same way as had been done with the child directed activity photographs.

Children's Drawing.

Children's drawing is a projective technique used to gain insight into their personality, perception of self in relation to others, group values, and attitudes (Klepsch and Logie, 1982). In order to uncover the children's inside information, Klepsch and Logie state that drawing is ideally suitable as a technique for uncovering information about inner self, and point out the unique role of drawing as follows:

> Drawings add a dimension not tapped by self report or observation techniques, the dimension of fantasy and imagination. While the use of several measures is always recommended, drawing should without fail be one of them. Drawings are easy to obtain,

> since most of them like to draw; they are especially valuable in the case of young children because of their limited language; they dig deeper into whatever aspect is being measured; and they seem to be able to plumb in the inner depths of a person and uncover some of the otherwise inaccessible inside information (p. 11)

Many authors writing on the topic of children's drawings agree on the need for multiple measures and suggest that drawing should be supplemented with information from another projective measure: from observations, from interview, or from objective type tests (Ball, 1971; Cook & Selltiz, 1964; Kahn 1978; Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 1966). The major concern is that the children's differing personalities such as being quiet or highly verbal may determine different techniques to successfully assess their responses. These authors agree that, for quiet or shy children who do not like to talk, drawing seems to be the best way to elicit their covert thoughts. Another advantage about drawing, according to Brannigan, Margolis and Moran (1979), is that drawing is not biased against impulsive children as some other techniques seem to be. However, Buck and Hammer (1969) emphasize the importance of post-drawing questioning to gain accurate inside information.

Researchers have analyzed children's drawings and developed a variety of tests and interpretive systems to measure the drawer's personality, conflict, impulse, anxiety, or perceptions about a particular person or situation. Among these tests, Draw-a-Person Tests developed differently by many researchers are widely used (Machover, 1953; Ogden, 1975; Koppitz, 1968; Pate & Nichole, 1971). The researchers looked for the human figures in the drawings and analyzed the quality of the drawing such as the type of line, shading, and size of figures; and the quality of the human figures such as the size of the head, the expression on the face, emphases and exaggeration or omissions of parts of the body (Machover, 1949; Koppitz, 1968). For example, Koppitz found that genitals in drawings of severely disturbed children often related to body anxiety and poor impulse control. She also found that children's drawings of a family reflected their attitudes toward their family. According to her analysis, omissions of family members, substitutions, and the size and position of figures were considered significant.

Family drawing and school drawing are used to gain information about the children's view of themselves in relation to other people or their perceptions of their family or school. Kutnick (1978) administered the task by asking the children to draw a picture of a classroom with people in it. When the drawings were finished, the children were questioned about the content of their pictures. The researcher focused the analysis on the human figure, the classroom and classroom objects, and the teacher and found that certain aspects of what the child had said were correlated with what he or she had drawn. The criteria to interpret the drawings include omissions of figures, placement of figures on the page, and relative size of figures.

In this study, all the children in each class were asked to draw what they liked best in their kindergarten. When the drawings were finished, each child was asked to "tell me about your picture" by the researcher, teacher, and teacher aide. The children's verbal responses to their own drawings were then recorded by note taking. Because the researcher was not a trained interpretor and the directions given to the children did not specify to have people in the drawings, the analysis focused on the children's verbal responses and the content of the pictures rather than on interpreting the meanings of the specific indicators or signs in the drawings such as omission, size, or placement of figures.

Data Analysis

Data in this study were obtained from two sources: (1) the researcher's reflections and (2) the children's reflections.

Data from the researcher's reflections came from the researcher's field notes and field journals, teacher interviews, tape-recorded transcription from teacher directed activities, and the researcher's conversations with children. These data included a great deal of description of what the children said and how they acted and responded to their environments in class. They were perceived and interpreted from the researcher's viewpoint.

Data from children's reflections came from the activities that were intentionally administered to the children to elicit their reflections on their school experiences. These activities included formal interviews, stimulated recall, and drawings.

The procedure of data analysis followed the application of the approach recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The data from both sources were analyzed separately, and the results were compared to find the relationships existing between what was perceived by the researcher and the children.

Stages of analyzing each item of the data were as follows:

Stage I

At this stage, the researcher was trying to develop categories arising out of the data. The data from each source, in the form of written materials,were analyzed separately at this stage to search for the concepts or categories that could describe each phenomenon. Recommended by Turner (1981), this question, "What categories, concepts or labels do we need in order to describe or to account for the phenomena discussed in this paragraph?" was addressed to every paragraph of the original materials, and a label was given to each emergent category. These labeled categories were listed with the page number of the material.

To collect the examples for each category, the researcher worked with photocopies of the original materials and glued the cut outs on the 5"x8" index cards. These cards were grouped and labeled according to the identified categories they represented. This procedure was a continuing process started from the first day of the data gathering period and continued for two and a half months. When new data indicated that they did not belong to any of the existing initial categories, new categories were added, and examples of the phenomenon that belonged to new categories were addded accordingly.

Because new concepts and additional examples for each category continually emerged, the process in stage I resulted in a total of 25 categories. After two and a half months, no additional categories emerged. The researcher continued analyzing the new data for another two weeks until she became confident that no new categories were emerging from the new data.

Stage II

At this point there was a need to gain "deeper and more precise understanding of the phenomena being examined" (Turner, 1981, p. 236), and to elaborate a "smaller set of higher concepts" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.110). The researcher examined all categories thoroughly to find whether any categories were the same instances of phenomena or not. The researcher was able to reduce her original list of 25 categories from adults' responses to 10 broad categories.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that definition be used for furthur investigation of the phenomena. At this point the researcher discarded the former categories and used only the 10 categories derived from stage I to identify the phenomena that occurred in the last three months of the data gathering period.

Stage III

This stage started after the researcher had finished data gathering. She looked for the relationships between each category by examining the examples under each category fully and tracing the links of the phenomena. This helped the researcher gain more insight of what had been happening during the data gathering period and narrow the focuses on what to look for in the conditions that caused the existing relationships.

The researcher examined the conditions under each category by addressing this question, "Why did it happen the way it was?" The tentative answers were listed and supported by pulling examples from each category.

Stage IV

To avoid biasing the data analysis, the researcher had consulted no body of research relating to her finding during the data gathering period or former stages of analysis until she reached this stage. At this point, she began to relate what she had found in her analysis to the existing body of research in early childhood education.

Although Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that the researcher check for confirmation or denial of the propositions generated by the study in other settings, the researcher did not follow this suggestion due to the time contraint and the purpose of this study which was not to generate theories, but rather to understand the phenomena under investigation.

The analysis of data from the researcher's reflections described above resulted in the identification of 10 major themes from the researcher's viewpoint: (a) teacher expectations and beliefs, (b) teacher-child interaction, (c) teaching approach, (d) content of the program, (e) control, (f) freedom, (g) modeling, (h) imitation, (i) imagination and creativity, and (j) self-esteem. These themes were not directly discussed, but the information from each theme was utilized to describe the program in chapter IV as well as to provide grounded explanations of the phenomena occurring in the themes developed from the children's reflections.

The same procedure in each stage was used for analyzing the children's reflections which were derived from their responses in the interviews, stimulated recall, and drawings. However, the nature of the data from the researcher's reflections was different from the children's, as it was accumulated and analyzed every day since the beginning of the data gathering period until the last day. During this time, the researcher perceived the phenomena of the children's schooling from her own perspective. Thus the responses from the children that were elicited by the research techniques used in this study automatically served as a cross-check as to whether the researcher had missed anything relevant to the children's feelings and perceptions of their schooling. By the same token, the analysis on the researcher's part provided grounded explanation as to why the children reacted the way they did.

Analysis of data from the children's reflections resulted in five major themes significant to the children's perceptions of their school experiences. These themes were: (a) experiencing freedom and control, (b) having affective experiences, (c) perceiving teacher's roles, (d) perceiving program components, (e) perceiving children's roles. These themes were generated by using the children's responses to the stimuli or research tools to illustrate the meaning schooling had for them, the explanation from the researcher's reflection, and the existing research literature in early childhood education.

The purpose of this study was not to use the majority of the same responses to generalize what was happening. The responses from many children, some children, or even an individual child were all presented to illustrate the existing reactions from the children to their schooling. One should also be aware that the children who felt or reacted differently from the majority in this study seemed to be those who either had some conflicts with the teacher, had personal problems at home such as parental separation, or were unique in their personalities and their needs. However, the majority response on each theme was pointed out that of children in this study who seemed to share a great deal of commonality in their behaviors and responses under the same situational context.

Credibility of the Study

The issue of credibility in the naturalistic-qualitative paradigm is quite different from the positivistic paragigm (Guba, 1981, Lecompte and Goetz, 1982). However, although in the positivistic paradigm reliability is judged by the replicability of the study and validity is concerned with the extent to which research findings can be generalized, the naturalistic-qualitative paradigm focuses on the extent to which comparability and translatability of findings can be achieved. Lecompte and Goetz (1982) identify comparability and translatability as follows:

> Comparability requires that the ethnographer delineate the characteristics of the group studied or constructs generated so clearly that they can serve as a basis for comparison with other like and unlike groups (Wolcott, 1973). Translatability assumes that research methods, analytic categories, and characteristics of phenomena and groups are identified so explicitly that comparisons can be conducted confidently.
> (Lecompte and Goetz, 1982, p. 34)

Bruyn (1966) suggests that the validity of the description and explanation provided by the researcher rests in the accurate portrayal of the studied groups as they construct their actions in the social setting. The portrayal of what was happening in the kinderarten programs in this study had been checked and confirmed to be accurate by the teachers in these programs. This procedure was identified by Guba (1981) under the term 'member check' and was also recommended by him as a technique to gain trustworthiness of the study.

In order to substantiate the inferred categories of analysis, the researcher provided multiple examples from her field notes and raw data from the children's responses, and preserved the raw data for further investigation or examination. While the investigation of this study was being carried out, the researcher had frequent discussions with her thesis advisor about the investigation, the program descriptions which had been deemed accurrate by the teachers in the study, the examples provided, and the categories of analysis. Her agreement on the sets of meanings used to describe the phenomena under study served as a guard against threats to internal reliability that might possibly have occurred in this study.

The Role of the Researcher

The researcher could not deny that her cultural and educational background may have effected her interpretation of data. As Kerlinger (1973) points out, "The basic weakness of the observer is that he can make quite incorrect inferences from observations" (p. 538). However, by presenting herself in the research settings for a considerable period of time, and by being aware of this weakness, the repetition of the same phenomena alerted the researcher to rethink about what she had perceived before. The researcher simply had a "respectful listening to what phenomenon speaks for itself" (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 51). The data from her field journal revealed that after the process to derive categories had been proceeding for about four months of the data gathering period, the researcher began to look at the same phenomenon from more different angles and could verify the bias she had before.

> I came to realize how much narrow I had been for the past four months. When I entered this Ph.D program in 1983, what was considered to be in fashion such as cognitively oriented approach and behavioral modification when I was in the master's degree program in 1971 seemed to be history and the play based oriented program was supposed to be outstandingly recommended for early childhood programs. Moreover, I was overwhelmed by the way Steiner presented his theory which collaborated very much with my beliefs. I prejudicedly saw only the pleasant side of Program A and gave much more credit than it really accomplished. For example, I had perceived the children in Program A very creative and imaginative, and thought that this program must have credits for it. However, when I started to sort out examples of this behavior to support this category, although I had a great deal of examples in my data, the themes the children presented were very repetitive and only the same few children generated this type of behavior. Moreover, the child that frequently had conflicts with the teacher was the one who demonstrated this behavior most of the time. From now on I should: (1) Do not become impressed easily by the number of occurrences but look carefully at the content and context of each occurence. (2) Ask myself first whether I saw this incident this way because it fit my beliefs or not. If not, what made me see it this way. Have I changed my beliefs? Why?
> (Researcher's field journal, April 28, 1985)

From self-dialogue as presented above, the researcher tried to acknowledge and take into account her own biases as a method of dealing with them. Thus the researcher attempted to objectively maintain her role as a filter through which the hidden meaning of the phenomenon was emerging. Readers may investigate this role by reading the researcher's statement of beliefs regarding education for young children in chapter VI in which discussions and suggestions about what an early childhood educator should be aware of are presented.

In the following chapter, the description of the kindergarten programs in this study and the children's responses to the interviews, stimulated recall, and picture drawings is presented as contextual references to the themes developed in this study.

CHAPTER IV

UNDERSTANDING YOUNG CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING

The first section of this chapter includes descriptions of the two programs based on observations and teacher's interviews. The researcher attempted to portray these two programs so that readers could visualize what the children's school experinces in each program were like. These descriptions were written prior to the analysis of the children's reflections on their programs and were solely from the researcher's viewpoint.

The second section is a summary of the children's responses to the interview questions, the stimulated recall, and picture drawings.

Description of Program A

Classroom Setting

Entering the classroom, one was immediately impressed with the pervasive emphasis on love of nature. The classroom was very spacious, giving an atmosphere of coziness, peace, and freedom. An abundance of natural light from the long row of windows facing the street made the nature oriented furnishings in the classroom even more impressive. All the toys and furniture were made from natural materials, very plain but functional. There were not the customary school desks, alphabet charts, numeral charts, or calendar charts, but rather a large dining room table and a sofa near the back of the room. It was more like a home setting rather than a classroom setting (see Appendix A for diagram).

In this classroom there were a variety of beautiful plants under the windows on the longer wall of the room which facing the door. Tiny gnomes made from cotton cloth were peeping here and there among the plants. Five or six porcelain plates full of seeds of different kinds were under one window on a shelf. The seeds had been displayed at this location throughout the year.

Above the windows along the wall, overlapping sections of dyed cheesecloth created a soft blue sky with a golden moon and glittering stars. One piece overlapped another artistically producing slightly different shades of blue. In the spring, the decoration at this location was changed to a pink cheesecloth background with pictures of flower fairies in the foreground.

Next to the rug, toward the back of the room and in front of the dining table, an orange tree which bore fragrant blossoms in the spring was standing in a big white pot on a medium sized table. Also on this table, were grey trays in which the children grew flower and vegetable bedding plants from seed.

Near the wood-working table were pieces of driftwood of different sizes and shapes, as well as a basket full of pine cones. The nature table stood beside the drift wood.

If one sat at the teacher's desk, which was very close to the single door of the classroom, the row of windows would be on the right. Far back in the right hand corner of the room, near the windows, there were two tables put together, making a big square table. This table was covered with a plastic tablecloth when used for artwork activities or snack time, and with a cotton tablecloth on special occasions. There were two adults' chairs at the ends of the table and children's chairs around the table. The area in the middle of the table was used as a center of attraction. Here, on a piece of dyed cheesecloth, the teacher usually placed a vase of fresh flowers or a flowering potted plants. She sometimes displayed children's small artwork such as wax modeling or paper butterflies around the vase on the edges of the abstract shaped cheesecloth.

At the back of the room in the right hand corner behind the dining table, there were two windows. On the windowsills were two rows of small green plastic baskets full of square crayons of one color per basket. To the left of the back windows was a stove, the cupboard over it full of porcelain teacups, a teakettle, small glass bowls, teaspoons, and assorted kitchenware. Adjacent to the stove was an adult counter with a sink as well as a child sized sink and drinking fountain.

The space behind the counter was separated by a divider about six feet long. The space close to the corner was used for hanging coats and smocks and for storing boots. The other space which was the left back corner of the room had a sofa and a reading lamp. Near the end of the sofa was a shelf of toys and books which effectively made the area a room within a room. This area was rather dark, becauses the divider and the shelf blocked most of the light from the windows. To compensate, the reading lamp was always left on.

The shelf at the end of the sofa faced the front of the room. Besides children's books, there were wooden toys such as airplanes, cars, and dominoes. One of the wooden toys was a Noah's Ark, with its complement of wooden animals. On the shelf was a straw basket where wooden trains painted in different colors were stored. Each train had a magnet attached to each end, and they were run on wooden track sets which were stored in a box on the floor near the shelf.

The children's cubbies located along the left wall as viewed from the teacher's desk were the only place where very bright colors were displayed. Each cubby had a flap made of cloth in bright blue, embroidered and patched in different designs with bright red, yellow, green and orange yarn and flannel. One of the mothers had made the flaps and given them to the class.

Next to the cubbies, towards the door, the nature table stood against the wall. On the table was the Mother Earth's cave. The cave was only about a foot long and had been formed with bent twigs in a half moon shape. The walls were made of burlap. This cave was always covered with cheesecloth colored according to the season, for example, green in the spring and yellow in the summer. Inside the cave, pasted on the back wall, was a piece of postcard- sized wrapping paper. The design on the paper was composed of vines with colorful flowers, birds, and birds' nests with eggs. The Mother Earth's cave was used for displaying valuable things connected with nature. Inside were a beautiful amethyst geode glittering brightly and a box of jewelry to be used by the children when dressing up. The cave was surrounded by flowering potted plants and vases of cut flowers, often brought by the children from home.

Over the Mother Earth's cave hung a big picture in a dark brown frame depicting a mother carrying her child lovingly. This represented the love of a mother for her child and also the love and support of Mother Nature for her children.

On the floor near the nature table there was a two-foot-high oval-shaped rattan basket full of slices of tree trunks and some driftwood. Two similar rattan baskets were filled with raw wool, one with white and the other with dark brown wool. A spinning wheel was located in the space between the nature table and the cubbies.

The wood-working table was adjacent to the doorway, next to the pile of driftwood. There were boxes of scrap wood under the table and tools on the table. A sand table was often placed by the wood-working table. The sand table could be converted to water play table by pulling it near the sink and replacing the sand with soap and water. On the wall over the wood working-table was a blackboard on which the teacher had drawn a chalk picture of a brown tree without leaves, golden daffodils scattering under the tree, blue sky and golden sun above the tree. Two gnomes were dancing among the daffodils. This drawing remained up from January until the last day of school.

The blocks were stacked in front of the teacher's desk, no higher than the height of the table. The housekeeping area was located on the right as you sat at the teacher's desk. It contained a play ironing board and an iron made of wood, a round table about two feet high and 20 inches in diameter, three child-sized chairs and one play high chair. The doll clothes rack full of doll clothes was on the floor in the corner against the front wall. Two doll beds with two dolls sleeping in them and two play baby carriages were lined up on the floor along the front wall. The dolls were made of soft cloth with two dots for eyes and no mouth so that the children could use their own imagination for the dolls' temperaments. A white real refrigerature of medium size was standing against the wall next to the teacher's book shelf. There was a play cooking station made of plywood. This station was composed of a counter with drawers and cupboards underneath, a plastic sink, play stoves, and a play oven.

There was a blackboard behind the teacher's desk, a small part of which had been used for pictures displaying classroom activities. Along the right hand side wall from the right hand front corner, there were some pink shelves leveled with the windowsills. These shelves stored miscellaneous items: a balance made from salad bowls, play pots and pans, pottery, and miniature furniture made from wood and rattan. These shelves ran about seven feet long to a wooden playhouse perpendicular to the shelves. This playhouse painted white could also be used as a puppet theatre. The puppet stage was on the other side of the house facing the carpet area. Many small-sized pieces of carpet of different colors were stored in this playhouse. The children often used them when building such block constructions as the floor of a castle or a spaceship. The puppet stage was sometimes used as a store.

A large oval carpet about eleven feet in length was located in the middle of the classroom. The rug had many shades of brown woven together in a spiral design. Along the right hand wall at this area, there were also pink shelves storing materials to be used in the art and craft activities such as yarn of different colors.

Because there were no school desks or learning centers for seat work, this setting was very roomy, giving the feeling of freedom of movement and peace to the heart of everybody who entered the classroom.

The Teacher's Belief

The teacher in this program said that she had a strong belief in Steiner's theory but declined to give full details about it because she felt that one should read from books in order to understand the principles underlying the theory. She stated that the main mode of learning in preschool- age children was "imitation." Imitation, in the program based on Steiner's principles, has a deeper meaning as Gardner (1975) explained that, "the preschool child is in the highest degree of 'imitative.' Imitation, however, is an inadequate word, easily misunderstood; for it permits one to imagine separation between the child and what he imitates. Far from being separate, he is at one with it" (Gardner, 1975, p.60). In Steiner's words, "The child is completely given up to his environment" (Steiner, 1982a, p.38). Therefore, Steiner's meaning is not "imitation" in the sense of copying, like a self-conscious actor, but "identification with", where one feels to be that with which one identifies.

The teacher put emphasis on the three R's but not the same R's as the traditional reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic. These three R's were "rhythm," "ritual," and "reverence." Steiner pointed out the importance of rhythm to our life as our organism lives with rhythm such as the heartbeat, breathing, and so forth. It was the breathing system, coming together and going apart, rhythmically. The rhythm was regular but not a mere routine. The detail could be altered but the rhythm was maintained.

The second 'R' was ritual. This included the festival of the seasons, ceremonies such as the birthday ceremony, the singing of blessing and greetings. The ritual reinforced the rhythm. The flow of the day seemed to include ritual as an important element, such as always singing a specific song before starting certain activities. Those activities were painting, storytelling, and having a snack.

The last 'R' was reverence. Because the young child is, according to Steiner, "an imitative religious being,"

> Words of reproof cannot help us with a little child. What does help us is what we ourselves do in the presence of the child, for when the child sees this it flows right into him and becomes sense-perception.
>
> (Steiner, 1982a, p.38)

The teacher said she tried to act from her heart rather than from her head, or in other words, to respond to the child from her sensitivity of feeling, not just from reasoning. This would create reverence for each other, nature and the creatures of nature. She felt that the three R's express the right kind of environment for the child.

The teacher believed that the brain could develop fully only when it was nurtured in the right environment for the child, with no stress or strain. Overstimulation for the brain was also avoided. She felt that it was important for the child of this age to have his or her imaginative faculty developed, with the intellectual faculties being developed later in the primary grades.

The Flow of the Day

At nine o'clock the classroom door was opened and the teacher stood at the doorway, waiting to greet each child as he or she entered the classroom. The teacher shook hands with each child while exchanging some conversation. The greeting was beneficial to both the teacher and the child in that they had eye contact, touch, and verbally communicated with each other. The teacher also had a chance to get a feeling of how each child was that day and could share whatever the child brought from home.

After greeting the teacher, each child would be directed to shake hands with the teacher aide or any visitors presented at that moment. Most children forgot to do so and needed to be reminded of this ritual. The teacher believed that it was best for the child to learn through imitation, but because it was not practical to show each child how to greet other adults in the classroom, she had to use verbal direction to cultivate this behavior.

After the greeting, the children put their personal things in their cubbies, hung up their coats, and changed their shoes. They then went to the dining table to do the art and craft activities. Some art projects needed many days or even a month to finish. The children worked at their art and craft project for about 15 or 20 minutes, then moved to the circle activities. The circle time started with the children standing in a circle, holding hands and being quiet. There was a variety of activities at circle time, but singing games seemed to be a regular activity. Most singing games allowed the children to move around and take turns, following the directions in the songs, such as choosing partners, turning around, and so forth. Sometimes the teacher introduced poems about nature and had the children dramatize them or look at the pictures in the poetry books. Sometimes she taught French songs by using a puppet named Michelle to talk to the children. The Eurythmy teacher came every Tuesday during this period to teach Eurythmy (a special kind of movement). The children sometimes had gymnastics but not often. At the end of this period, the children sang the good morning song and recited the greeting poem before dismissing for free play. This part of the morning was an endeavor to create a sense of ritual within the children.

Free play lasted for almost half an hour. The children could choose any toys and create any play they wished to do. The children who laid their hands on the toys first or created the activities first usually assumed the authority to allow another child to join them. The teacher usually asked the teacher's aide or visitors to supervise the children at the spots where special supervision was needed, such as the block area, while she prepared snack for the children. After this, if there was time, she would join the children for a little while before standing up and spreading her hands above her head, saying, "Children, show me what it means." The washrooms were at some distance from the classroom, so the teacher's aide took those children who needed to go, after which they returned to clean up.

The children went out for recess for about 15 minutes. The teacher usually asked the aide or visitors to accompany the children to the playground. She sometimes joined the children, especially when the weather was warm. If some children were behind in their art project, she would then bring the children's work with her to the park, and would call the children who had not finished their art project to work with her individually.

After recess, the children put away their coats and outside shoes. They then lined up at the sink to wash their hands and get ready for snack. They sat around the dining table, preferably next to the child they liked. The teacher sometimes directed a child to sit with some other children when interruptions occurred. The teacher directed the children to sing a blessing before starting to eat.

There were many versions of blessing verses, all of them about the beauty of nature and expressing the thankfulness to the creature of nature who gave us food. Snacks were served in small glass bowls, one for each child. Herb tea, with or without honey, was served daily in porcelain cups, together with some bread or baking made by the teacher during the playtime. Sometimes they had fruit or granola cereal with milk or vegetable snacks such as carrot sticks or "Ants on the Logs" which were celery sticks with peanut butter and raisins. Usually a few children were involved in preparing snacks with the teacher, either by volunteering or being chosen by the teacher. Snack time was like family time when everybody sat facing each other and engaging in conversation. Children actively joined in the conversation when the topic triggered their interests and they wanted to share something. When one child proposed a topic of conversation, the other children from the whole group responded to it until another child changed the topic. Occasionally a child would add unrelated comments to the topic. The teacher acted like the president, sharing ideas or organizing the flow of conversation to be smooth and pleasant. After about 15 minutes, even if not all the children had finished their snack, the teacher would start story time allowing the ones who had not finished to go on eating.

Story time began with the teacher directing the children to sing a song for story time. They called this song "The Moon Boat" song:

> Mother of the fairy tale
> Take me by your silver hand.
> Take me to your silver land.
> Take me to your silver boat.
> Take me silently afloat.
> Mother of the fairy tale
> Take me to your silver land.

Then the teacher started to tell a story which usually lasted about 15 to 25 minutes. The same story was told for the whole week or at least three days. There were only two kinds of stories used: fairy tales and nature stories. The emphasis was on telling the story by heart so that the teacher told it with feeling, expressing her feelings and having eye contact with the children. It was believed that a mutual relationship occurred when the communication was expressed from the inner being, not from the surface. At first the teacher would tell the story without any visual aids, letting the children imagine the events and the characters. Then she gradually introduced puppets or pictures. The last day of the week was often used for dramatization. Not every story was dramatized, but most of the fairy tales were.

When the story time was over, they sang the goodbye song:

> Goodbye now. Goodbye now.
> It's time to go or we'll be late.
> Let ... (name of the child)
> lead us to the gate.
> Goodbye now. Goodbye now.
> I'll see you all again.

Each day the teacher chose a different child to be the leader and to be the first to come to shake hands and say goodbye to the teacher. Then the child shook hands with the other adults in the classroom. The other children took turns doing so and then got ready to go home.

Teacher's Approaches to the Program Components

Art and crafts

In this program, the teacher emphasized helping the children get the work done, as well as guiding them to appreciate art. She usually asked the aide or visitors to sit beside a child who needed help. "Will you sit by Mail because he really needs special help?" (March 3, 1985). Many of the boys had difficulty with the fine motor control neccessary for finger knitting, weaving, and sewing. Sometimes they just sat staring, or chatted with friends next to them, or simply kept saying to the aide or visitors, "Would you do this for me?" The teacher sometimes called those who were behind their peers to work with her or visitors during playtime or recess, but not often. The children who possessed the skills in using their hands seemed to enjoy the craft projects. When asked, "What is best in your kindergarten?" Michelle answered, "Finger knitting." The children who seemed to have problems in fine motor co-ordination tended to be slow and reluctant. However, every child had to do the same thing and finish the same task before beginning a new project. The teacher tried to assign adults to work with the children who were slow and had problems, but the freedom to improvise was rather limited.

> The children were making cards for Nicky's birthday. The card was made by cutting the color paper open as a window and pasting color tissue paper on the window. The teacher drew the shape of the window for the child. The child did the cutting and pasting. Every child had the same color of paper, the same shape and size. The teacher also cut the tissue paper of different colors; brown for the stem, red for the petal and green for the leaves. She put each in different bowls and distributed them to the children to paste the tissue paper on the window of the card. She asked me to help a few children who were slow. Michelle refused to let me help her. She said, "I can do it by myself." It seemed to be difficult because the tissue paper was very thin and delicate. The cut out leaves, petals and especially the stem was so tiny and fragile. However, many children were doing a good job. Only the young ones seemed to be clumsy. Isabel started to draw a nice design on the frame of the window. The teacher said, "No, don't do that Isabel." Isabel said, "Why?" The teacher couldn't find the answer immediately and then continued with less firm voice, "Because that's not the way it is."
>
> (Researcher's observation, April 10, 1985)

The art and crafts activities had inflexible scheduling; painting once a week, drawing once a week, and the rest of the days were used for the craft project. The craft projects varied from making cards for special occasions such as festivals and birthdays, to festival crafts such as dyeing Easter eggs and sewing pictures for Mother's day gifts. Drawing was usually related to stories the children had listened to. The teacher then asked them to talk about what they had drawn, and wrote it down under the picture. Painting was special. There was a particular approach to painting. Each child was given a board and a sponge soaked in water. The child wet the board thoroughly with the sponge. The teacher put the painting paper into the water in the sink and soaked it for a few seconds and gave it to each child. She then put the paper on the center of the board herself and let the child use the sponge to wipe off the excess water and flatten the bubbles until the paper was neatly flat and damp. When every child was ready and had jars of paints and a jar of water, the teacher started to distribute the paintbrushes. She sang the paintbrush song over and over while giving the children the paintbrushes. She ceased singing when the children started to paint. There was a special way to paint that the children had to follow. They had to let the colors "dance together" by not putting one color over the other. They put each stroke beside the other so that the color from one could blend with the other. To do this meant to create a color land as the song described:

Rainbow, colors glow.
Put the paint brush in your hand.
Together we'll make a color land.

A special kind of paper was used, white and thick similar to watercolor paper. The paints were expensive German watercolors of very high quality. Only the primary colors, red, blue, and yellow were used. Two children shared a set of paints, but each had his or her own water jar. The water in the jar was changed frequently by the adults in the classroom when it looked dirty. The children were not allowed to talk while they were painting. This seemed to be frustrating to some children, and this rule was frequently broken. Although the teacher kept warning the children from time to time, they forgot and talked to friends or to themselves. The teacher wanted painting time to be the time when the children practiced concentration on the task they were doing. Talking was not allowed because it was believed that the child's concentration would be disrupted.

The children sometimes did wax modeling. They were given pieces of colored wax and warmed it in their hands by rolling it until it was soft enough to make shapes. They made butterflies, flowers, and other objects from nature.

Making cards was the art activities that the children did quite often. There was a particular pattern: a card with a window made by pasting on tissue paper decorated with designs about nature. The card had to be viewed in a particular way also. The viewer had to hold the card up to the light to see the window design clearly. It looked illuminated when the light shone through correctly.

In addition to finger knitting to make rugs and weaving it into Easter baskets, the children did some weaving with a paper loom. In the spring they made mobile paper butterflies and did some vegetable print-making.

For some children, the arts and crafts projects seemed to be a chore rather than a pleasurable experience. Perhaps this was partly due to lack of skill in fine motor control and partly because of the repetition of the activities. They did not show enthusiasm for finishing the projects, and because they had to get "help" almost throughout the project, it was questionable how much sense of accomplishment they felt. However, those children whose eye-hand coordination was good showed interest and enjoyment for this type of work.

Circle Time

Circle time was composed of activities involved with singing games, Eurythmy, poem reading, and gymnastics.

a. Singing Games

Action songs were used for singing games. The children not only sang but acted and moved around. Most of the singing games included either choosing partners or doing particular actions according to the song. There were many values in the singing game, both in the words and in the way the actions had been done. Some songs such as "Water Wall Flower," gave concepts of the world to the children:

> Water wall flower growing up so high
> We are all God's children and we all must die.
> Except for --- and --- (name of the children
> chosen)
> The fairest of us all.
> They shall sing and they shall dance and they shall
> do the Highland fling
> Fie, fie ... turn yourself to the wall again.

This song exposed the children to the concept of death in a nice way, yet showed them nobody could escape it. The children held hands and walked in a circle and stopped when the teacher chose two children to be named in the song. The two chosen invented their own dancing when the group sang, "They shall sing and they shall dance ... " and turn themselves to face in the opposite direction, but still held hands and walked and sang with the group when the song was changed to "Turn yourself to the ring again." This represented the birth and death cycle; that after death rebirth would come.

There were social values in the singing game that fascinated the children. When one was chosen to be a partner or to portray the actions in the song, the child's eyes always showed delight. Even for adults, all the tensions seemed to be released when participating in the singing games or Eurythmy which required the whole body and the mind to concentrate joyfully on the words and the actions. If some children were not chosen when the game was about to be over, the teacher would direct the others to choose them. Usually they kept playing the same game until all the children had a chance to be chosen. Many of the games included choosing partners and then following each other skipping around the circle before coming back to the original place; then the second child took a turn to choose. Some games required some touching such as patting the partner's shoulder or holding hands. Enjoyable human relationships were created in a pleasant, warm atmosphere as the singing game proceeded.

b. Poem Reading

Aesthetic appreciation of nature was introduced in the form of finger play and poems to be dramatized. An example is when the children did a finger play about a little boy who went to see the beauty of nature and came back to tell his mother how wonderful nature was. Understanding of nature phenomena was strengthened by having the children dramatize poems about nature. An example follows:

Seed

In the heart of a seed,
Buried deep, so deep,
A dear little plant
Lay fast asleep.

Wake, said the sun,

And creep to the light.
Wake, said the voice
of the raindrop bright.

The little plant heard,
And arose to see
What the wonderful
Outside world might be.

In this game, one child was chosen to sit crouching like a sleeping seed. The other children stood in a circle around the child while the teacher recited the poems, or sometimes they all sat crouching in a circle. The children then spread themselves little by little as the poem continued until they were fully grown by the end of the poem.

Most poems used personifications, as the approach was to develop the children's imaginative faculties. One could argue that this type of poem fed the children "cute sentiment" rather than substantial thoughts and expression. This was because this program emphasized avoiding any intellectual stimulation, but rather encouraged imagination, as it was believed that the child of this age was in a dreamlike stage. As a rationale for emphasizing imaginative rather than intellectual modes of learning for young children, Steiner used a metaphor that giving the children of different ages the same size of shoes would not do them any favor even if they were excellent shoes (Steiner, 1982a). This was why the selections of poems and literature were mainly based on intriguing the children's imagination, rather than rationalization which should be postponed until the child was older.

c. Eurythmy

Eurythmy is considered an important elememt of any program that uses Steiner's educational approach. It is a unique activity initiated by Steiner. Steiner regards Eurythmy as "of a threefold nature, movement as such, feeling expressed movement and the expression of the soul-life of man" (Kroeker, 1962, p.120). Van Ordt (1979) described the uniqueness of Eurythmy as follows:

> This kind of controlling content, form, and rhythm is like learning to contol life itself. It does not make sense to do a eurythmy movement while you are thinking of other things, or while your thoughts wander about. The thought has to go into the movement and penetrate the body that forms it. That makes the movement a totally conscious one. The whole body is being penetrated with thought and feeling and will. (p. 97)

Eurythmy has to be taught by Eurythmists who must have four years of training before being certified to teach. It is a form of rhythmical exercises that combines poetry, drama, and music. Eurythmy is regarded as a visible form of speech, as Steiner compares the nature of speech which is to express the innermost feelings of human being to Eurythmy:

> carried into movements of the arms and hands, into movements of the whole human being. there then arise in visible form of actual counterpart of speech. One can use the entire human body in such a way that it really carries out these movements which are otherwise carried out by organs connected

> with speech and song. Thus there arises visible speech, visible songs - in other words, the art of Eurythmy.
> (Steiner in Kroeker, 1962, p. 118)

Eurythmy for kindergarten comprised mostly dramatic actions based on fairy tales, brief poems about nature, or stories in verse. In this program the Eurythmy teacher came once a week for about 15 minutes. When doing Eurythmy, the teacher and the children stood in a circle. The teacher recited the poems or sang the songs and did the dramatic actions without directing the children to follow. Interestingly, all the children paid very close attention to what the teacher did and imitated every movement. She did not teach the children one piece at a time but introduced many pieces, letting the children pick up what they could. She repeated the old pieces while introducing new ones each time she came. The children could not really remember everything, but they enjoyed watching and imitating. At eurythmy time the teacher had no problems with interruptions from the children, because they had to use all their faculties to be able to follow what was happening at that moment.

The way the story was used in Eurythmy was also unique. The teacher used dramatic tones of voices to tell the story. Only one main part was told in prose with the addition of some short poems. The characters of the story of that part had to be in the center of the circle, wearing some colored cheesecloth to symbolize the roles in the story; for example, Briar Rose wore pink cheesecloth as her cape, the king wore blue, the queen yellow, the prince light blue. The children who formed the circle walked around the characters of that part and also formed the movements of hands and body according to the words in the story or the poems. For instance, the teacher recited, "Twelve fairies came to give a blessing, a blessing, a blessing. Twelve fairies came to give a blessing to Briar Rose." While walking around the circle, she bent her body at the waist and spread her arms in a gesture of blessing in front of Briar Rose who sat with the king and the queen in the middle of the circle. All the children except the characters imitated what she did. Some could imitate very well but others could not. In any case, all kept their eyes on the teacher and enthusiastically tried their best in every Eurythmy class. No child had to be warned about interruptions which often occurred in painting time or story time. Usually it was during the narration part that the children in the circle performed actions such as chopping wood, burning the spinning wheel, and so forth. Eurythmy was the activity that the children seemed to enjoy most.

When the Eurythmy time was over, the regular teacher, who always participated in the activities, picked a boy to escort the teacher, to the classroom door. The child would take her hand and walk with her to the door. The Eurythmy teacher always shook hands, said goodbye, and said each child's and adult's name respectively before leaving.

d. Gymnastic

The teacher had a unique approach to teaching gymnastics using stories written in verses for the children to practice gymnastics. Once she used the story of a snowshoe hare who was hunted. The children walked and ran and skipped and tiptoed rhythmically according to the rhythms the teacher gave using the triangle. The teacher did the actions as a model for the children to follow in a big circle, while reciting the story and also directing the children to follow the actions according to the story. The actions encouraged the children to use their big muscles jumping, rolling, and running while paying close attention to the direction and the story. This approach also illustrated the program philosophy of educating the child's whole being rather than just part by part. Not only were the children involved in physical exercises, but something was entering their minds and nurturing their spirits from the moral of the story or the beautiful verses recited by the teacher. Their coordination was enhanced not only physically but mentally in following the rhythms and the story and creating actions to fit the roles of the characters in the story. However, the teacher allowed the researcher to observe this type of gymnastics only once, and it seemed that gymnastics was seldom practiced in this program.

e. French

French was also introduced almost once a week during circle time. The children played some singing games or sang some French action songs. The teacer often told the story or showed pictures about the songs before singing. She used a puppet which had no eyes, nose, and mouth, named Michelle to do the action songs with the children. For instance, songs about parts of the body, the puppet pointed at the parts named in the song. The puppet performed the actions such as clapping her hands rhythmically and the children followed her. Michelle also talked to the children individually and had them reply in French. The emphasis was on imitation rather than memorization.

Playtime

Playtime was the busiest time for the children. They were free to choose whatever or whomever they wanted to play with. The children liked to dress up by putting the cheesecloth on or wearing the golden crowns as members of royalty, or improvising any dressing up such as wearing jewelery or a cloak. Then they went to any area they liked and played their roles. The king may go to the housekeeping area and played having a meal with the other children at the restaurant. The most creative spot was the block area. The children built manay different constructions out of the blocks. Since the space for block building was not limited, the children created many themes out of block building. They built castles and dressed up as the king, the queen, or the princes and princesses, and sat in the constructions they had built. The most popular construction was a spaceship. For the last month of the school year, the children built spaceships every day. Interestingly, the design was never the same from day to day although it was sometimes built by the same child.. Of the many themes arising from block building, they most frequently played astronauts engaging in a variety of activities in their journey. For instance, the astronauts sometimes got the food from the restaurant in the housekeeping area, at other times used a piece of driftwood to fuel their space ship.

The block area was often a busy social place for the children, for while in other areas they did not really need permission to join because the number of blocks was limited, they had to negotiate permission from the children who were already using the blocks. Some children, especially girls, seldom had a chance to play with blocks during the entire observation period of six months. One girl indicated in the interview that she liked blocks. When asked why she never played with blocks, she replied that the blocks were always occupied by the boys. The teacher seldom directed the play, and usually let the children take control of whatever happened, under the aide's supervision, while she was preparing snacks.

Another type of construction play that stimulated a great deal of imagination was the use of driftwood and the pine cones. The children built forests, caves for gnomes, a road to the other kingdom, and even a castle. They usually used the cheesecloth symbolically; green cheesecloth over a driftwood made a forest, blue pieces of cheesecloth put together made a river. They created the land of imagination by themselves. One child put the driftwood in a circle in front of the cubbies and sat in the middle of the circle with a box full of buttons. When asked what he was doing, he said, "Please leave me alone. I want to be alone with my jewelry." When the playtime was over and the same child was asked to put his jewelry away, he said, "They are just buttons."

The playhouse was also used as a store or a puppet theatre. Since there were no puppets in the classroom, the children used the dolls to play puppetry. On some occasions, the teacher made puppets out of a string tied to a piece of cloth stuffed with a little ball of cotton as the head of the puppet without any facial definition. The children not only played with these puppets in the play house, but took them around the room to play in the constructions they made from the driftwood or just walked with the puppet, holding the string to make the puppet bounce while walking. The children were not restricted to specific stereotyped functions of the toys. They continually improvised, and their ability to use objects symbolically was tremendous. The puzzles could become a piece of merchandise for sale, lotto sets of flowers and vegetables became fresh flowers and vegetables for sale in a store.

The most popular toy was the train set which was newly bought after Christmas. The train tracks were pieces of wood that could be joined together to make different shapes of track. When all the pieces were put together, they occupied the whole area of the carpet in the middle of the room. Because the toy was new and all the children were eager to play with it, the teacher suggested that only three children could play at a time and each could have not more than four cars. The cars could be joined together to make trains by the magnet attached to the end of each. The children moved their trains along the track they had built and often had conversation among themselves or verbalized what they were doing or wanted to do with their trains. They often decorated their train track by adding scenery. Pine cones made forest, a piece of blue cheesecloth made a river, a few pieces of driftwood made a mountain, the animals from the Noah's Ark made wild animals in the forest where the trains passed.

The housekeeping area was occupied equally by boys and girls and often included those who had "dressed up." The most popular activity was playing family. Usually the family included animals, as some children liked to play being pets. They tied themselves with some yarn and asked the other children to lead them to their owners.

Not many children were interested in wood-working, with only a few boys showing interest during the observation period. Whenever they made too much noise with the hammering, the teacher would warn them to do it properly.

The children enjoyed the area where the sofa was. It was like a small private room for them where they could sit quietly looking at pictures from books they chose. They often used this place to exchange conversations among themselves about whatever they wanted to share privately such as movies they recently had seen, or a trip they made the past weekend. They sometimes asked the aide or visitors to read books for them in this area.

While the children were actively playing, the teacher chose two children or let volunteers help her prepare a snack. Preparing snack in this program was considered to be an important aspect of creating an atmosphere of family life with the teacher's role being like a mother preparing snacks for her own children. Quite often she baked fresh bread for the snack. The children who were her helpers not only had a chance to have a cooking experience but also an opportunity to talk to her personally. Even so, few children liked to volunteer to help cooking. If the same children repeatedly volunteered, the teacher chose the other children whether or not they were willing to help. The reason ~~given was~~ that she wanted to cultivate the child's will to do what he or she should do. During the snack preparation the children usually played under the supervision of the aide or the researcher. The children respected their own freedom and disliked intervention or interruption from adults in their play. At their playtime they had their own world, the world of imagination, and any inquiring questions or interventions about academic concepts or imposing ideas seemed to be interruptions to them. The only role the adults could readily engage in during playtime was to be their playmates. If they wished to interject some ideas, they could start an activity and, if the children were interested in it, they would join it. If not there was no way to impose the adult's world on the child's world in this program.

Recess

Recess time was the time for outdoor play for about 15 to 20 minutes. The children went out and stayed at the monkey bar which was very close to the building until the children from the elementary classes went inside; then they went to the big park which was about five minutes' walk from the building. There were swings, sand pools, and a jungle gym composed of slides, a bridge, and stairs. The teacher seldom went with the children. She used this time to finish preparing the snack or getting some paper work done. If the aide or visitors were available, she requested them to supervise the children during outdoor play. If not, she went with the children and used this time to interact with them individually. If the teacher did not go with the children, when snack was ready, she rang the cowbell as a signal for the children to come back to the classroom.

The children were creative and imaginative not only in playtime where materials and toys could be used to support the themes they invented. During outdoor play, they also did a great deal of role play or imaginative play. The popular themes were playing monster, royal family, and fishing.

> In the playground, Kate said, "I'll be the Mom. You'll be the baby." Then they changed the theme to play a little girl and a monster. Kate got the rope and ran. "Baby get the rope," she shouted. She tried to save the baby and take it to the river. "Baby, come out here. I want to save you from the monster. She shouted to another child, "Give me the rope. The bridge is broken." They ran down the bridge. Kate shouted, "Jump into the river." They all jumped into the sand pool.
> (Reseacher's observation, April 18, 1985)

Snack time

During snack time the children exchanged conversations with peers and the teacher. Occasionally, they did show-and-tell after snack time. This had to be arranged with the teacher one day before. Before snack time the children held their hands and sang a blessing. Here is one blessing that was sung.

For flowers that bloom above the trees, we thank thee.
For tender grass so nice and green, we thank thee.
For songs of birds, tra la la la la
For humming bees Hm....Hm..
For things we hear and see Hm....Hm...
Father in heaven we thank thee.
A blessing on our meals today.

Story time

Story time came right after snack time, mostly at the dining table but sometimes, when the teacher wanted to show pictures from the books to the children in the carpet area. Each story was told repeatedly over one week so that the children had enough time to digest whatever they heard and integrate it into their own understanding and memory, learned the language or recognise things they did not catch the previous time. The story was told exactly the same way, using the same words and expressions each day, except on the fourth or fifth day when pictures were shown or the story was dramatized. For nature stories, the teacher usually read instead of telling them because she wanted to show the children exactly the way they were written. Most of the nature stories used description, which was difficult to memorize from the original source.

Fairy tales were always told, as the teacher felt it was important to have eye contact and tell the story from her heart with her own feelings and understanding toward the characters and the events. For some stories that the children liked, the group was attentive throughout the week, responding eagerly to the story by giving meanings of words or saying the events in the story in advance to show that they remembered the story. For some stories the group seemed to get restless when told for just the second time. They started to talk to each other or spoke to the others. The teacher had to remind them that she did not want any interruptions. Story time turned into a stressful time for a few children when this happened.

There was very little discussion about the story, and the teacher did not raise questions and sometimes avoided answering questions from the children. Fairy tales had many events that seemed not to be rational to some of the children. In the story of the seven ravens, the sister cut her finger to unlock the door. When one child questioned the teacher why she had to cut her finger, the teacher replied that it was because she loved her brothers more than her finger. She never discussed about the values in the stories, leaving them to be interpreted by the children in their own way because it was believed that they already had a pre-earthly life and brought with them their own individuality and wisdom. She expected the children to gradually take the story into their memory and only values meaningful to them would sink down into their being, for example, perseverance, bravery, honesty, consistency and other values interpretted from the story.

Overview

This program is a play based program where children's play was given priority as the essence of the program. Some play based programs used play to stimulate intellectual capacities, but this program focused more on stimulating the children to be imaginative and responsive to the aesthetic values. The teacher's strategies, based on her interpretation of Steiner's principles, were unique and the researcher found that some were different from those of some other teachers who followed the same principles. For example, de Ris (1979) mentioned having the children do a lot of science experimentation and giving them different kinds of questions that stimulated them to think divergently.

> We had a graphic illustration of this when our milk was left outside the building one extremely cold morning ... this led to series of experiments with freezing.
>
> In talking about animals, we tried to develop their understanding of the relationship about wild life as dog to wolf; cat to lion - also of what we mean by the word animal as differentiated from plant and stone - the different types of animals birds and

fish (p. 37).

This type of activity did not exist in Program A where exploration and expansion of any concepts relating to factual knowledge seemed to fall into the category of intellectual stimulation which was believed not to be proper for the kindergarten children. On the other hand, de Ris saw these activities as a means to the same goals Teacher A was sharing: to develop better human beings.

> The most important thing is not so much which experiment we emphasize, but that we develop human beings who will not be afraid to try things, who will be explorative and have confidence in themselves.
>
> (de Ris, 1979, p. 37)

A summary of how Teacher A put her philosophy into practice is presented below:

1. Finished products had more priority than process.

This emphasis was obvious when the children were given tasks from the teacher's directed activities, not when the children had play activities. For example, the teacher always designed the patterns of craft work for the whole class and made sure that they finished the work by the time a new project was introduced. There was more of the teacher giving models and having the children imitate the process, showing rather than encouraging the children to challenge or explore different ideas out of the framework designed by the teacher.

2. Non-mediated learning.

Feuerstein (in Juliebo, 1985) defines the transcendent nature of mediated learning as giving access to children to understand the rationale behind the actions. In this program the teacher seldom gave praise or comments on children's good work or behavior, nor criticism on their poor work or behavior. When the children engaged in unacceptable behavior during teacher directed activities, there were varied teacher's responses. She might ask them to leave the activity and sit at a place she directed them to (this approach did not occur often), or give them a look that made the children sense they were doing something not proper, following with saying their names in a warning manner or rearranging their placement so that they sat or stood with another child or close to the teacher, or just simply ignored their behaviors when she considered that confrontation might lead to more conflicts and confusions. By doing this the teacher avoided making the children perceive the world through her mediation between them and their environment, allowing the children to be the mediator of their own environment and take time to sort out what was meaningful to their "selves."

> Robert was playing with a wooden airplane and ran around the classroom, making the sound of an airplane. The teacher stopped him and told him that he should build a route for the airplane with the driftwood and let the airplane run only on its route. Robert refused to do so and continued his play. The teacher took the airplane from him. Robert started crying loudly, saying that the

> kindergarten did not belong to Miss A but belonged to everybody. Miss A ignored what Robert was wailing until he became tired and decided to choose something else to do . When asked why she took the airplane from him, she replied that she wanted to give Robert a form. He lacked a form and ran aimlessly around the classroom. However, she did not give Robert any explanation of what she thought.
> (Researcher's observation, May 16, 1985)

3. Repetitive experiences.

The teacher's approach seemed to involve introducing repetitive activities or information that were considered valuable for the children. For example, the children frequently made similar patterns of cards in their art activities. They listened to the same story repeatedly for the whole week. They played the same singing game over and over until everybody had a chance to be the leader in the game. The teacher stated in the interview she thought that if she repeated the same story, the children had a better chance to sort out what they had missed before and gradually build up their own understanding or grasp the concept of whatever was presented to them.

The approaches used in this program were outstandingly different from the other program in this study. Although they were under the same school board and were committed to use Early Childhood Services philosophy, the teacher's personal philosophy and approaches evidently resulted in differring learning environments for the children in each program.

Description of Program B

Classroom Setting

The classroom was very colorful and attractive, with most of the educational materials artistically made by the teacher. Pictures on the walls and bulletin boards were laminated. The atmosphere was very pleasant, but academically oriented. Five chickens hatched by the children in the science project were in one cage. Susie the snake was entwining her long body around a branch in another cage, while George and Georgina, the salmanders, were eating worms in their cage. At one end of the room under the sign "Plant Heaven," a variety of plants were displayed on rows of plant shelves reaching almost to the ceiling.

The room was divided into two parts, the carpet area and the learning centers area. The carpet area was like a room within a room, with shelves of children's books and educational games and a piano serving as walls. The learning centers took up all the space left in this room. Each learning center was very attractive. Many of them were formed by putting two child-sized tables together side by side, facing a decorated divider which served as a bulletin board for each center. Each center had its own identifying color of tables and chairs. Some centers had a three-dimensional bulletin board made of cardboard hanging from the ceiling over the table so that the children could follow directions from the examples by looking at the pictures displayed on the board.

Near the entrance to the room, there was a table full of books for parents to borrow to educate themselves about their child and early childhood education. The types of materials included topics such as child psychology, methods of teaching young children in different areas such as math, language and reading, nutrition, and so forth. There were chairs so the parents could sit and read while waiting to pick their children up, or they could check the books out if interested.

When one entered the classroom, the impression was that the room was a little crowded. The learning centers took most of the space and controlled the dimensions of the class. The children were very task oriented, always keeping themselves busy with the task they chose or had been assigned. Socialization was greatly evident as children helped each other, exchanged ideas, and had conversations. Many of the centers such as water, sand, blocks, clay, and painting were common to all child centered early childhood program. However, many of them were geared specifically for children to learn concepts in math, science, language, and perceptual skills, and to exercise their eye-hand coordination in sewing, weaving, cutting, pasting, and writing.

Each center also had pictorial directions on the bulletin board attached to each station. The children usually tried to figure out by themselves how to work on the tasks. The teacher provided individual attention, and the children were free to ask for help any time they did not understand what was expected of them. The children made their own decision to stop working on a task whenever they got tired. They might come back to the task the next day or just sign off by making a cross on the picture of that center on their individual planning sheet which was given in weekly. New activities at each center were introduced by the teacher who demonstrated how to use the materials and gave all details before letting the children choose to work at that center. However, the children were free to improvise any ideas in their work.

The room was rearranged quite often. The locations of some centers, animal cages, and decorations were changed almost monthly. New centers were set up, and some old ones were withdrawn as new activities were introduced. Usually the themes were changed each month, but during each theme there were also some minor changes. Some areas had their own permanent place, such as the teacher's desk at the back of the room, the painting center near the sink, the plant center near the window, and the loft or imaginative play center at the corner of the front wall.

Although the carpet area was only about four meters square, it served many functions and was the central gathering place for group activities, such as snack time, story time, cultural time (when parents took turns to talk and display their cultural roots to the children), and the introduction of new concepts and activities.

The children's art work was displayed on two giant bulletin boards outside the room along the hallway, one for the afternoon program and one for the morning program. Some outstanding pieces were displayed on the door. Everything in the room was brightly colored and provided a cheerful atmosphere for anyone who entered the room.

The Philosophical Base

While this program was based on the philosophy of Early Childhood Services, much of its uniqueness evolved from the teacher's experiences and beliefs. Early Childhood Services (ECS) places emphasis on the importance of providing experiences that meet the developmental needs of the child, the parents, and the community (Alberta Education, 1984). The children must be given opportunities to express and explore their feelings. The child's psychological needs stated in the ECS philosophy were the need for attention, acceptance, and love. Each child needs to experience and express feelings; to communicate in his or her individual ways; to have self worth and self concept; and to play.

ECS regards play as a major learning process for the child to develop language skills, relationships with others, and also new concepts. In the learning process, the child needs interaction with the environment, as sensory learning plays a most important role in intellectual development at this age. A diversity of experiences enhances the child's ability to develop language, generate new ideas, and solve problems.

Parents have been seen as primary agents in the child's development and it is considered crucial that the ECS program provide parents with information and opportuity to understand and work competently with their children.

The program should also be responsive to the needs of the community and involve the community and community members as resources for the educational process.

The Teacher's Beliefs

The teacher in this program believed that having high expectations of children enhanced the child's development in many ways. She felt that young children were underestimated in their ability to think rationally and in their academic, language, and problem solving skills. From her past experiences, she had found that if the children were given enough time and freedom to explore in an environment where the materials and approaches were appropriate to the child's structure of thinking, interests, and level of physical, social and emotional and intellectual devlopment, each child could learn something at his or her own pace. In her words, "The child learns something out of any activity that challenges his ability" (Interview, May 22, 85). Her belief strongly affected her approach to teaching.

This approach had evolved over her teaching career and she called it, "A Literary Approach." Chapter stories were used instead of children's story books which were frequently used in kindergarten classes. Although many of the books seemed to be very sophisticated and complicated for kindergarteners, she used them in a manner that appealed to the children and influenced them. The children in this program frequently referred to the characters and events from the books in their imaginative play, drawing, and writing, and they always were involved in active discussions at story time. One book could be used for about a month, more or less depending on the length of the story. The teacher used the characters and events in the stories to introduce nature, science, morals, language, counting, predictions of the causes and effects, and so forth. Projects in arts, math, science and field trips were always related to the story being used to the children at the time. Examples of the books were Watership Down, The Wizard of Oz, Charlotte's Web, Peter Pan, and The Secret Garden. The teacher believed that children learned much more from chapter stories than from children's picture books because the concepts about the world, morality, values, and so forth could gradually be built as the children followed the adventures of the characters in the stories, allowing them to explore feelings and modify their own understanding and attitudes toward how people act and react to the environment. This method of using literature is elaborated later.

Another goal was that her program should enhance the love for learning. She believed that when children were encouraged to use their fullest potential in a loving, supportive, challenging, and rich environment, they would develop a love for learning. She felt this was the most important learning experience a young child could have. The reason she had so many learning centers in her classroom and involved the children in planning and evaluating their own choices, was based on the belief that the children should be given an opportunity to try as many things as possible. These learning experiences would be more enjoyable for the children when they felt they had some control over their own activities. For example, children could make their own decision as to whether to stop doing an activity in a center, even though they had visited it for just a few minutes. While one child might find a center either too difficult or too boring, other children could visit that center several times if it appealed to them.

The teacher had a strong belief that parental involvement was a way of enhancing the quality of the program. She visited each child in his or her home and saw the parents at least twice a semester. To see the parents and the child at the home helped the teacher to understand more about the child's background and parents' expectations. It also helped her to avoid conflicts that might have arisen because of religious beliefs, culture, and personal problems. She also invited the parents to class to share their skills and experiences or to help with the learning activities. She always received their cooperation because the relationship between the teacher and the parents was based on a mutual understanding and respect. She also went through the child's evaluation with the parents, discussing all the strengths and weaknesses of the child with them. A newsletter was issued monthly which informed the parents of the class activities for the month, shared knowledge about the children, explained why some particular things had to be done, and asked for help from the parents when needed. One of the outstanding parent involvement projects was the cultural days when parents took turns to come to talk to the children for about half an hour about their culture and the countries where they or their ancestors came from. They also brought artifacts and food for the children to examine and taste. Although some parents were not keen to talk to young children about detailed facts in a simple way, the children were always good listeners and eager to ask the parents questions after the talk. The children particularly enjoyed tasting the food and looking at the artifacts brought by the parents.

The teacher felt that the more she got the parents involved in the program, the more she learned about how best to tailor the learning experiences to meet the children's needs and to satisfy the parents' educational concerns. Through this shared understanding she trusted the child would not experience conflicts between home and school which might hinder the child's love for school and learning. For example, the children whose parents were Jehovah Witnesses were not allowed to make or receive a Valentines' card, so the teacher had the children in class write letters to others instead of giving them a card. This helped to eliminate the possibility that the children might start to resent their own religion or even their parents for not allowing them to be part of the class activities

The Flow of the Day

When the children arrived, they went to the carpet area after hanging up their coats and putting away their belongings. They played with the puzzles, read or looked at some books, listened to the records and did their duties if they were responsible for plants or animals. This provided time for the children to socialize among themselves as they gathered.

Around 1:15, the teacher would sit at her chair in front of the class. This was a big armchair, covered with a colorful afghan. The teacher called for attention and told the children to find their own personal spaces and sit properly. The day started with a conversation initiated by either the teacher or the children depending on what was going on. Then the teacher introduced some new activities so that the children could work independently at center time. Children might also be reminded of special things they had to do that particular day. The schedule varied slightly according to the day and situation. Some of the whole class activities the teacher and class did together were language games involving rhyming and making dictionary books from collections of pictures brought by the children. On Tuesday and Thursday, group time was followed by 15 to 20 minutes in the gym and then back to the room for story time. At the beginning of the year, story time lasted for about 10 minutes and gradually increased to 20 minutes or more by the end of the year.

The children had recess after story time. They then had a snack in the carpet area, sitting in four fixed groups that were changed only twice a year. Snacks were mostly finger foods such as varieties of cheese, fresh vegetables and fruit, raisins and nuts, and so forth. Snack time was a time when children socialized mostly among themselves in their own fixed group. The children brought some vegetables and fruit with them on the vegetable or fruit snack day. The aide cut and arranged them and served one plate for each group.

The teacher or the aide usually called for attention and told the children to clean up, although most of the children started to clean up by emptying their plates and putting garbage away as they finished eating. The teacher and the aide took turns starting the calendar activity after everything was cleaned up and the children were ready. If the children were still noisy, the teacher and aide had a code which they used to quiet the children. When they said, "Secret Agent 99", the children shouted out the code and then stopped talking completely. They seemed to enjoy being quiet after shouting the code.

The calendar activity started with the teacher or the aide selecting a child to be the leader and the names of the children who were helpers of the day. An octopus chart on a low movable bulletin board described pictorially the jobs to be done, and the children's names were attached below each task. The purpose of the calendar activity was not only to acquaint the children with dates and remind them about their responsibilities such as taking care of plants and animals, but also to familiarize the children with syllables and sounds from their friends' names. The child who was the leader would not directly call out the names of the children who were on duty but rather gave a hint that the names started with certain letters.

Gradually they learned to recognize their friends' names and most of them could read every child's name tag by the end of the year. After that the teacher usually gave specific details about some particular centers before dismissing the children for center time.

Center time lasted about half an hour. Each child would choose three centers he or she was interested in and marked them on his or her individual planning sheet. The task planning sheet (see appendix C) was composed of pictures of each center. For example, the construction center had a picture of a pair of scissors and a bottle of glue, and the sewing center had a picture of a threaded needle. A complex system of recording was used. For example, in February each center was drawn in a heart shape. Within each 'heart center,' there were two or three tiny circles and a tiny heart. If the children visited the center and finished it, or did not want to go back again, they crossed out the 'heart center.' If the children did not finish or wanted to go to that center again the next day, they shaded one of the circles in the heart shape but did not cross out the heart. The children shaded the tiny hearts to indicate which centers they would like to visit as their plans for the following day. In the beginning of the year this was done on a daily, teacher directed basis and progressed gradually to a weekly sheet directed by the child. Before going home, the children returned their planning sheets to the teacher and discussed with her individually about what they had experienced that day and their plans for the following day. In this way the children were eased easily into taking on self-responsibility and self-evaluation.

The teacher and the aide checked from the children's task planning sheet the centers they had visited and recorded this information on a big chart located on the bulletin board at the back of the room. This bulletin board contained picturs of all centers. Each center picture had about three to five pins for the children to hang their name tags which were cardboard cut in a small circle. During Monday through Thursday, the teacher or the aide put the children's name tags on the pictures of the centers the children had to visit that day. On Friday they had free centers which meant that they could choose under no condition. Before signing in on the planning sheet, the children had to check their name tags to find which centers they were assigned to visit. This gave the teacher a chance to make sure that the children would visit every center so that the diversity of their experiences was increased. The purpose was to give the children an opportunity to explore beyond their interests. If they still did not like to be in that particular center, they were free to leave after a very short time. It turned out that the children began to like centers that they had never chosen before and spent a longer time exploring. This also helped solve the problem of overcrowded centers, and allowed every child a chance to visit every center. The length of time spent at each center was left to the child's discretion.

When center time was over, the children would get ready to go home. Usually, the teacher or the teacher's aide turned the light off for a few seconds as a signal. The children were told to hold their breath so they would stop talking and all activities they were engaged in at that moment and begin to clean up. The children then came to the carpet area and the teacher would announce any information she wanted to give the children before going home.

Friday was a special day because the schedule was different from the others. The children could go to any centers they wanted to without any obligation to fill up the ones they had not finished. Friday was also library day, and the librarian was in charge of reading to the children in the library for story time. The librarian selected a great variety of children' s picture story books depending on the themes of the week or the month. Some were about festivals or seasonal occasions, while others related to the story the teacher was using in her story time during that week. For example, the classroom teacher had read Charlotte's Web, a story about the adventures of a young pig and a spider, from Monday through Thursday, and on that Friday the librarian read a book about the nature of different kinds of spiders. After the story was finished, a large group art project would take place in the library. The project was an extension from the story. Usually parent helpers came to supervise the activities. The children would listen and observe the class teacher demonstrate and explain what they were supposed to do. Then they sat in their fixed group in a circle on the floor, or sometimes they used one table for each group if the activity needed one. The class teacher, the aide, and the parent helpers went around to supervise each group.

On Tuesday and Thursday the children had gymnastics for about 20 minutes before story time. On these days, story time was shorter and so were other activities such as conversation and announcements. The children also had cooking projects in which they developed some recipes relating to the story they were reading during that week. For example, as in Charlotte's Web, they made Mrs. Arable's farm doughnuts. The teacher usually had a small group of children take turns working in the cooking project, where they measured, mixed, and did whatever was necessary under the supervision of the teacher.

The schedule of the day would be as follows:

1:00-1:15 Arrival and free time activities
in the carpet area.

1:15-1:30	Conversation between teacher and children/announcements/and orientation of new centers in terms of new concept formation or language or math games.
1:30-2:00	Story time/or cultural time.
2:00-2:15	Recess.
2:15-2:30	Snack.
2:30-2:45	Calendar time/announcements/or orientation of new learning center.
2:45-3:20	Center time.
3:20-3:30	Clean up/announcements/ready to go home.

The schedule was flexible and could be changed slightly for other activities on some special days as follows:

Friday: Library day and special art project.

Tuesday/ Thursday: Gymnastics.

Monday/ Wedesday: Cooking project/Music.

Field trips were added quite often. Sometimes the children from both the morning class and the afternoon class went in the same bus, but sometimes each group went separately.

The Teacher's Approaches to Program Components

There was a great deal of flexibility about how the teacher approached each component. A remarkable tactic the teacher used was the way she had the aide work in the classroom. In this program, the aide's role was more or less as another teacher. The teacher often had the aide take charge of the whole class in introducing new concepts while the teacher took the role as the aide's partner, making comments or expanding some explanation in the form of joyful dialogues between themselves in front of the class.

A unique approach the teacher used in her program was the literary approach. The teacher had been inspired to develop this approach when a parent wanted to pull her child from the teacher's kindergarten class because the parent considered that there was not enough literature in the program. The teacher then made literature her focus and found students' response positive and enlightening. In order to validate her approach, she went to England and did an empirical study, "Using Literary Theme Development in the Nursery Classroom." Her research convinced her to continue using this method when she returned to Canada.

The literary approach

The approach described below was initially innovated by the teacher observed in this study and combined using learning centers, the language experience approach, and unit teaching. It also stressed the need for developing children's autonomy and love for learning.

This approach was based on the premise that from literature the children could anticipate feelings and emotions similar to those evoked for people of all ages, depending on the level of their anticipation. The teacher in the program saw the values of literature as introducing young children to the worthwhileness of human experience within natural situations such as the context of nature, family, and personal relations. This could be a powerful force in children's learning, as it focused on the children's appreciation and enjoyment. The excitement of following the adventures of the heroes in the stories gave the children both enjoyment and appreciation of whatever impressed them as the events revealed themselves in subtle ways. From the stories chosen to be read in this program, the children were expected to appreciate nature, its beauty and power on living things, and to understand many concepts relating to life and morality.

The teacher's strategies could be summarized as follows:

a. Sharing the story.

The story was told, not read. Only some of the dialogues and small parts from the original book were read to the children. The teacher spent time reading the book again and again until she could memorize every detail, but made a careful selection to emphasize or to dismiss some parts as inappropriate to the understanding and interests of the children. For example, in Charlotte's Web, the chapter about Fern's mother going to consult the psychiatrist about the problem of her daughter being able to understand animals' language in the farm was omitted. Overly descriptive settings were cut short, leaving only the essence of the description. The teacher said she practiced reading the parts to be told to the children until she felt confident and content before presenting it to them. However, she always remained true to the character dialogue and read these portion directly from the unabridged book.

When the story was first introduced to the children, the teacher would display pictures of the main characters in the story, one or two at a time, to arouse the children's curiosity. As the story went on, more pictures in the form of laminated pictures with colorful details were put on display. The children's imagination became more concrete, and they were encouraged to create pictures in their minds when listening to the story. They could even produce pictures of their own about the events in the story that impressed them. Since young children learn through imitation, the teacher carefully arranged the display so that the children would develop aesthetic attitudes toward literature. The children used the illustrations from the display as their stepping stones to fantasize more about the story. The children seemed to be very sharp in picking up even small details about the characters in the story, especially when pictures were shown to them.

> (The aide was going to show the children how to paint. She was sitting half way facing the easel which was facing the children. The teacher was standing in the back of the class. The children could see the whole paper that was going to be painted but only the side of the aide. When she talked to the children, she turned her whole face to the class.)
> Aide: "I am painting the sun and what else should I paint?"
> Children: (More than a few) "Paint Bigwig."
> (The aide started to paint a rabbit.)
> Rob: "That's going to be Hazel."
> Aide: "Do you think it's very hard to paint a rabbit?"
> (She finished painting a picture of a rabbit and said:
> Aide: "This is Fiver."
> Dane: "That's Hazel because Hazel has two parts standing up."
> (He pointed to the bulletin board in front of the class and looked carefully at the picture of Hazel on it.)
> (Researcher's observation, March 20, 1985)

Whether the teacher was telling or reading the story, she always had the original in her hand. She told the story, dramatically using gestures and various tones of voice appropriate to the mood or events. Then she used pictures of events if available to summarize the plots again. The children seemed to enjoy being her chorus at this point. The teacher usually stopped to discuss the points she considered important, such as things about nature and morals. The teacher always responded to the children's questions or comments which were given frequently during the story time.

b. Leading the discussion.

Before continuing the story at the beginning of story time, the teacher used questions to review the story told the previous day. The questions mostly emphasized facts and helped the students to prepare themselves. However, when she started to tell the new part, most questions were open, inviting the children to share opinions and reasons about what was coming up in the story. Some questions used in the discussion are noted below:

Why is the blood coming out of his throat?
What was the good reason for...?
How do you know...?
Why does Captain Holly want them to go?

Besides questions, the teacher often shared her point of view relating to what was going on in the story.

Teacher: And the leader was General Woundwart and he was very mean. When he was young, he was a good little rabbit, just as you are all good little boys and little girls...
(The teacher read some more.)
Teacher: And right again you have the choice to grow up to be good human being or you grow up to be like...(pause)
Children: Him.
Teacher: Started out a nice little boy he grew up evil and it's up to you to grow up evil or grow up good. One of the things I know ... all of you are going to grow up."
Children: Yeah!
Teacher: One of the things that spoiled General

Woundwart was that he was greedy. Are you greedy?
Children: No.
Teacher: No, you always share little things. I'll watch you when it comes snack time you should share. Don't grab all the ones you like for yourself. Sharing is good. So watch out! Don't become greedy.
(Researcher's observation, March 15, 1985)

Very often abstract concepts arose. When they did, the teacher always had interesting tactics to simplify or to help the children to perceive or understand. The tactic she used most often was to refer to contexts that the children were familiar with and people who were very close to them as examples. She never omitted any abstract concepts to be clarified, and the children seemed to enjoy the discussion by participating actively.

Teacher: General Woundwart got too much power and that made him bad.
Carl: When you eat too much you got too much power.
Teacher: Well, no, food doesn't give you power. It's like this: when you own things and people always do what you say. Because of my position as a teacher, I have got a lot of power because you have to listen to me. I come here and say, "You stupid bla...bla..(She made nasty gesture and voice.) like that and how do you like it? And that makes me remember not to have too much power because if I think I can only teach you and you can't teach me and it goes to my head and I will become a bad teacher. I think that you can teach me too and I share. Then I am a better teacher, right?
Candy: Right. And you teach me and I teach you and my mom and my dad teach you.
Teacher: That's right. We can always learn.

> You keep thinking that you can learn from somebody else, then you will never have too much power. O.K.?
>
> Children: Yeah!
>
> Teacher: Good.
>
> (Researcher's observation, March 15, 1985)

c. Dealing with values and moral expectations.

The teacher always used the characters in the story to personify abstract values and moral expectations when situations arose in class.

> (One child was asking the other for some help at a learning center. The other child said something mean to that child, refusing to help.)
>
> Teacher: Is that polite acting like that? Hazel will say, "I don't know how to help you," or "May I help you?"
>
> (Hazel was a wise learned rabbit who always gave good advice to the other rabbits when they had problems.)
>
> (Researcher's observation, April 16, 1985)

The teacher used the names of the characters in the literature as codes to categorize behaviors and personality. General Woundwart was categorized as being greedy and mean; Bigwig as being brave and good; Hazel as being wise and helpful. The children in this class had no difficulty in understanding the codes, because the story kept revealing what was significant about each character. "Don't be like General Woundwart" was much more meaningful to the chldren in this class than "Don't be mean to your friends" because the first example dramatically gave them the overall picture of the behaviors and their consequences. Because one story lasted about a month, the children developed strong feelings and imagination through the teacher's continual input. By reading the story dramatically and encouraging active discussion, many abstract concepts were simplified. The learning centers, such as the imaginative center where they could act out in the costumes, or the writing center, where pictures of events in the story were exibited, expanded and enhanced various concepts that were relevant to values and morality.

d. Attracting the children's interest.

The teacher used many approaches to stimulate the children's interest. The teacher always dramatized what she was reading, using different tones of voice, gestures, and actions. Through careful planning and preparation, the parts that might bore the children were omitted and lively examples or discussion were added whenever necessary. On the bulletin board, which covered the whole wall in front of the carpet area, colorful pictures of the characters or objects in the story were added as the story progressed. In the beginning of the story, The Secret Garden, the bottom of the bulletin board was decorated with colorful flowers made of fabric, and big colorful letters displayed the name of the story. The next day, a robin, made of realistic looking material, was hanging in front of the board. A few days later, a picture of one of the heroes in the story was displayed. Colorful maps relating to the story were also added at the appropriate time. The ongoing process was dynamic and the children were the center of all the dynamics. When the teacher was going to end the story, after summarizing what had been read that day, she always left on a note of suspense or posed questions to stimulate the children's curiosity. Very often she used the pictures from the story or from the books for this purpose.

> (The teacher showed a picture from the book that she was reading, Charlotte's Web)
> Teacher: Tomorrow she (Charlotte) is going to tell a story about this. (Pointed to the picture) Looks like a spider caught a fish in the spider web. Can a spider catch a fish?
> Children: No...o..
> Teacher: We have to read it tomorrow.
> (Researcher's observation, May 10, 1985)

Language experience

Language experience was integrated into the literary approach the teacher was using. The children used the story as a means to express their imagination, and they were encouraged to become seekers of meaning through writing.

"Writing" in the sense of the language experience approach in this program meant that the children expressed their thinking in words. What was significant to the child usually became the topic of this writing. The child dictated what he or she had in mind to the adult who wrote it down and read it back. Through this process, the child gained the understanding that his thinking could be communicated to other people, not only by talking or drawing but also by writing. Writing and reading became meaningful to the child, because his or her thinking became visible, and anybody could share the enjoyment of reading it as many times as they wanted.

All the children had their own writing books which had coiled spines and brightly colored laminated covers with their names on the front. The writing pads had lines on every other page. The children could draw any pictures they wished and sometimes drew pictures about themselves, their families, and other events that impressed them. However, most children chose to draw the events or characters from the story being read to them that week. Some chose stories previously read if they still had feelings about what happened in those stories. The children then told the story about their pictures to the teacher, the aides, or the parent helpers who wrote it down for them on the lined pads. The teacher was particular about the way the adult wrote for the children. The printing had to be neat and the directions of how to draw each letter had to be followed. She gave a sheet showing how to write each character to every teacher's helper who wanted to work with the children at this center. She also required that the helpers write double spaced and not more than five words on each line so that the children would not get confused.

The teacher sometimes asked questions about what the child dictated to make it clear, and modified what was said by the child, but always asked the child whether that was what he or she wanted to say. Doing this helped the children to improve their English, especially those who came from non-English speaking families. However, the teacher usually kept the child's own words rather than correcting them.

The teacher read to the child what had been written. From the researcher's observations, it seemed that most children's faces beamed with pride or joy when the teacher was reading what they had told her to write. Then the child traced the teacher's writing. The teacher or the aide always sat with the children until they finished tracing, and sounded out each word for the children as they were tracing that particular letter or word.

Here are examples from the children's work.

Jane:
Dorothy caught Toto
by the ear.
The Cowardly Lion
bit Toto and Dorothy
slapped the Cowardly
Lion on the nose.
(The Wizard of Oz)

Dane:
Kehaar crashed into the grass
and Bigwig and Hazel laughed at him.
(Watership Down)

Nina:
It is summer time and I have my pool out.
I am swimming under the water.
(Children's own experience)

It was noticeable that the children preferred writing about the story rather than about their own experiences. Interestingly, the stories they wrote sometimes were not the same as the original but from their imagination, using parts of the original stories or characters for starting point, as shown in Jane's story about Dorothy and the Lion in The Wizard of Oz.

The children developed their ability to express their ideas and also learned to recognize all the letters of the alphabet and the words they used frequently in their writing activities. Because the words were from their own interests, and in their own words they could relate to the written form, many of the children could correctly read what they dictated to the teacher. Most of the children in this program could read a great number of words and were enthusiastic about reading.

> At recess time, a few children came to get their coats. They stopped at the snake cage and read the sign aloud, "Susie the Snake." They also read the names of their friends at the coat rack.
>
> (Researcher's observation, March 14, 1985)

Various writing activities related to the field trips taken. For instance, after visiting a farm, the children wrote a letter to thank the owner. The children took turns dictating one or more sentences about what they wanted to tell the farmer. The teacher modified each sentence as necessary to polish the language or to make it easier to read, but with the approval from the owners of the sentences. This letter was written on a big chart paper and, when finished, the whole class read it together. Each child then signed his or her names on the paper, and some children drew pictures at the bottom. Reading, writing, thinking, and speaking were integrated in meaningful ways, and the children experienced the various uses of language in several contexts.

Learning centers

The learning centers in this program focused on giving the children a chance to explore and challenge their interests and ability to learn concepts through self-directed activities. Although the content in some centers seemed to be academic in nature such as math, writing, and science, the approach was more or less play oriented. The children had control over what they were going to do and the way they were going to do it in each center. Although the teacher might demonstrate what could be done in the centers, it was optional whether the children followed the directions. Even when scheduled to visit centers assigned by the teacher, the child could terminate the activities as soon as he or she felt that it was enough. Some centers had many activities to choose such as the construction centers where the children could do several crafts. Many centers allowed open-ended activities such as water, sand, imaginative center, and blocks. Other centers provided props such as the flannel center, the shadow center, and the manipulative center where the child structured his or her own ways of using the props. This even occurred in centers that seemed to have academic content.

> A child went to the math center but did not play the math game. He used the counters as props to play telling stories by himself. Another child joined the center and also the play. Then the second child started to put all the counters on the game board and started counting aloud. The first child watched for a while and then joined the counting game.
> (Researcher's observation, June 9, 1985)

The balanced control was obvious. The teacher's control took the form of providing what she thought was appropriate for the children to do, demonstrating how they should use the materials, and supervising them when they needed help. She also made sure that the children visited every center weekly so that they could expand their horizons. They had control of what and how long they felt the activity was appropriate for themselves. The idea was not to force the children to learn or to do everything the teacher thought they should learn, but to give them opportunities to expose themselves to new experiences. The teacher reported that she found many centers the children did not originally choose turned out to be fascinating to them after spending some time at those centers. Later on the children voluntarily chose them on the free center day and also spent a longer time in them.

Because the children felt they had control of their environment and were free to make decisions, they enjoyed center time as evidenced by the interviews which indicated that 90 percent of the children in the class reported that the best part of their kindergarten was centers.

Unit teaching

In terms of unit teaching, each story was used as the core of the unit, and other activities were built around the themes arising from the story. Activities could be initiated by both the teacher and the children:

> (The teacher was telling the story of Watership Down from the picture and also having conversation with the class)
> Teacher: "I can draw a picture of her in my mind. Somebody asked me to draw a picture of Strawberry (a female character in the story) and I am going to do it tonight. Remember if you want me to draw a picture for you, What do you have to do?"
> Children: (together) "Write a note."
> (The children could dictate the note to the aide to write it for them.)
> (Researcher's observation, March 5, 1985)

At the imaginative center, the teacher always provided costumes and puppets of the characters in the story being told at that time. When The Wizard of Oz was told, the children had the witch's costumes, Dorothy's and others.

When Watership Down was the theme, the children had puppets of all the characters in the story to play with. Pig counters were used at the math center in the month of Charlotte's Web and rabbits were used for Watership Down. The teacher explained that this was more meaningful to the children, because when they counted or played math games, they could relate to Bigwig (the hero in Watership Down) or Wilbur (The hero in Charlotte's Web). It was fun for them in terms of relating what had evoked strong feelings and emotions to be elaborated in the forms of playing and manipulating. The math game became part of the imaginative outlet for the children as they linked the world of fantasy to the world of reality.

Here is an example of how a story was used as a unit of teaching.

a. Story time.

Charlotte's Web was read and discussed. This story was about a runt pig who was rescued and raised by a little girl on a farm; when he grew up his friends saved him from being killed by the farmer. Charlotte, the female spider, was the one who developed the major plan of action to help him survive.

b. Science.

When the story was being read, the teacher took time to discuss the nature of each animal that appeared in the story.

c. Manipulation.

A manipulative model of a farm setting with a barn and animals was presented at the manipulative center.

d. Math.

Counting games about pigs and spiders were presented in the math center with the counters made from fired and lacquered play dough, modeled and painted in the shapes of a pig's face and a spider.

e. Field trip.

A field trip was made to a farm.

f. Imaginative play.

Heads of animals in the story made from fabric and flannel were presented at the imaginative center; the children could wear these as a full head mask while play acting or role playing about the story.

g. Writing.

Pictures of events and characters were demonstrated on the bulletin board in front of the carpet area and also at the three-dimensional board at the writing center. This stimulated the children to think about what had impressed them in the story and express their own imagination in the form of drawing, and telling what they had drawn to be written in their writing books by the teacher or the aide.

h. Construction.

Materials and patterns of paper bag puppets of the characters in the story were presented for the children to choose to make one or more.

i. Work sheet.

Work sheets of farm settings were presented for the children to fill in letters of the initial sounds of the words for each picture.

j. Projects.

Art project: Making spiders.

Cooking project: Making farm donuts.

Science project: Getting fertilized eggs during the fieldtrip to the farm. The chicks were hatched and raised until they were big enough to send back to the farm. The unhatched eggs were preserved in bottles with each stage of the fetal development shown in a separate bottle.

The Teacher's Approach to Control in the Classroom

This classroom was very crowded due to the large number of children and abundance of materials. The children came from various types of backgrounds, and many of them were immigrants. Discipline was important to keep peace in the classroom. The teacher did not wait to practice her authority until the problems occurred, but tended to prevent the children from needing discipline. For example, when the children had to walk in a line to the gym, it was likely that 25 children would create a lot of noise or become uncontrolled and disturb the other classes. For this reason the teacher usually told the children to pretend to be an imaginary character like Captain Cook who had only one eye and a wooden leg. The children joyfully covered an eye with one hand and used the other hand to support the lame leg. To do this limited the children from teasing or poking the others, because they were concentrating on doing their best to walk like Captain Cook. The children always formed the line quickly, walked in a neat row without any noise until they reached the gym. The teacher never used the same command for the children on these occasions. The children might be Captain Cook one time, a little mouse who had a piece of cheese in its mouth another time, and so forth. The result was that there was no need to discipline the children, because the chances for them to misbehave were controlled in advance.

The teacher's sensitivity to the children's feelings and needs played an important role in the way she dealt with classroom control. She was sensitive to the mental and physical tensions of children. If the story was long, or she sensed that the children were tiring, she would stop and play some games with the children, such as asking them to make a happy face, an angry face, and a sad face, or have them massage to their necks or faces by giving them simple directions. After a break like this, she went back to the activities they had been doing before.

When a child interrupted, for example by poking another child, the teacher would ask the child what he should do. The child would say that he or she had to leave the room. The teacher always repeated that the reason the child had to leave was so that he or she would have time to think and could come back whenever ready. Again, the control was balanced. The teacher set up the rule, but the child could make the decision as to how long to remain outside. After having enough time to "think," the child usually came back to join the class and did not repeat the disruption during that period of time.

The important key to the strategy of using control in this classroom seemed to come from the premise that when the children were actively involved in any activities, both their physical and emotional needs were considered in an attempt to prevent the recurrence of undesired behavior. The control was used to prevent undesired behaviors rather than to correct them.

An opportunity to make choices and direct their own activities seemed to make control in the classroom enjoyable to the children and alleviate the stress that children may feel when required to conform to teacher chosen and directed activities. The children were assigned three centers to visit each day, but they could choose the sequence and terminate the activities as they wished. When the task seemed to make the child feel tired, he or she could leave the task and came back another day. A good system of records enabled the teacher to check how many times the child visited each center and how many centers he or she had not finished. She could then learn from the records and her observations the child's strengths, weaknesses, and the preferences, and was thus able to provide support more effectively. For example, the teacher would spend time with the child at a center where he or she seldom stayed long or voluntarily chose. To be with the teacher with him gave the child a special sense of support which created good feelings toward spending a longer time at that center.

Overview

The approach used in this classroom emphasized getting the children to appreciate books and literature for enjoyment and to derive values or morals from the story. The story was used as the themes for learning, as all activities were integrated according to the theme of the story. The intention was to give the children secured environmnet, helping them to feel that the continuity of everything fit together. The teacher served as a tour guide who took the children into the world of fantasy through literature, and those fantasies were made meaningful to the children by relating them to the facts that the children experienced in everyday life. The children were expected to be involved in the decision making process in the controls used in the classroom.

The unique strategy the teacher used in her program was that she developed a very *careful system of keeping* records of what the children had been doing each day during the center time. Early in the year the children's planning sheets were simplistic in nature. As time progressed the sheets encouraged the children to show more responsibility for their actions. This encouraged self-responsibility in the children. The teacher and the aide also recorded their observations of the children's behaviors during center time in an observation sheet. This helped the teacher to plan what she thought was best for each individual child based on his or her strengths, weaknesses, and interests and also enabled her to report her observations accurately to the parents.

Another strategy was to give only positive responses to the children's behaviors. For example, when the children were tested, they were individually informed by the teacher what they did correctly and what the teacher thought were their strengths without her telling them what they had done wrong or their weaknesses. This strategy seemed to reinforce the children's self love, self-confidence and positive attitudes toward school and learning. The teacher seemed to put great effort into helping the children to see themselves as an being achievers and well-loved persons by showing them affection individually whenever the occasion arose.

One outstanding strategy this teacher used was to emhasize modeling. She frequently presented examples or models of behaviors instead of reprimanding or criticizing the undesired behaviors of what the children were doing. This was done in many different ways such as sharing with the children stories about herself and her brothers when they were young, commenting that what some children had been or were doing that was the opposite of the problem behaviors. By doing this she criticized only the behaviors that seemed to become a problem, but did not directly attack the problem children, leaving them to sort out their feelings and thoughts about what she presented.

A strategy to reinforce the children's love for books and literature was used in this program by borrowing about 20 books every three weeks from the public libraries under her own name and exhibiting them on the book shelves in the classroom. The teacher or the aide spent a few minutes giving a synopsis of some books, one at a time at convenience, to the class and letting the children who were interested in those books sign them out to read at home with the parents.

The atmosphere in this program was rather academically oriented but full of love, caring, and respect for individual autonomy, needs, and ability. These strategies seemed to have a great impact on the both the children's overt and covert behaviors. This is described in the next chapter.

Summary of the Children's Responses

While the program description has provided some information about the educational environment each program had provided for the children, the children's responses from the interviews, stimulated recall, and drawings reflect their perceptions of their schooling.

The Interview

Children from both programs were individually interviwed in June. Each child was invited to talk with the researcher privately during their recess and child directed activities time. (In Program A it was free play time, and in Program B it was center time.) This experience was not new to the children, as they had been informally interviewed since the data gathering period started. Some of the questions were modified from the previous informal interviews.

The interview questions were selected to elicit the children's responses either directly or indirectly to what they perceived from their school experiences. For example, question #1 asked directly what the children thought was best about their program, while question #6 asked about what a good program should be. By the same token, question #2 asked directly about what the children felt toward their teacher, while question #7 asked about what a good teacher should be. This procedure was designed to let the children project what they perceived from their real experiences into imaginary situations. Each pair of questions mentioned above served as a cross check to each other about what the children really perceived from their school experiences.

Although most children were cooperative in answering the questions, some of the children in Program A were reluctant to answer questions that asked their opinions or reasoning. Their responses were either "I don't know," or just leaving and refusing to participate when they were asked to resume the conversation.

A few children in Program B also had difficulty in answering some questions, saying, "I don't know", or "I can't tell," but showed compliance to the researcher's requests to continue the conversation. Moreover, the children from Program B did not include any negative related expressions in their responses, while some children from Program A did. The children's responses in the interviews are developed under Program A and Program B.

Program A

The children expressed that what they liked about their teacher was "when she did not get mad at the children; when she did not force the children to do things against their wills; when she did some activities with them such as clean up or plant with them." They also stated that they liked her because she made good snacks; because she said and did nice things to the children; because she was nice; because she teaches the children and because she was quiet." They included the art activities she planned as what they thought was best about her.

What the children perceived as the roles of a kindergarten teacher included "setting the table; making snack; planting and transplanting; singing songs; telling the children things they did not know and what they meant; reading stories; and giving children some food."

The children mentioned activities as either "what they liked best in their kindergarten; what they learned from their kindergarten, or what a kindergarten should have." The activities or centers where the activities took place which seemed to be meaningful to the children in Program A were blocks, playtime, water play, sand play, singing, doll center, wood-working, dressing up, and reading.

The things the children identified as important to a kindergarten program included "the building, playground equipment, grass, arts and crafts (things for children to make), water and sand play, toys, materials and greeting."

The children felt that in a good kindergarten program "the children should be good, listen to the teacher, clean up, and do things for the teacher."

The things that made the children happy included "The Mother Earth cave (nature center), plants, happy children, books, toys, dolls, and blocks."

The children felt that they went to school "because their mothers wanted them to go to school; the teacher wanted to teach them; they had to help the teacher; they would learn or have to learn; and school was good for children."

What the children felt they would learn, should learn, or had learned from school were "playing, singing, reading, writing, circle time, manners, the order of the day, and safety."

While most of the children had fairly positive comments, a few included some negative responses such as "nothing was good about the teacher; nothing was good about the kindergarten; and they felt they learned nothing." While children from Program B openly expressed their affection towards their kindergarten experiences saying that "their kindergarten was fun or they loved their teacher, this type of responses was not found among the children from Program A.

Program B

The children from Program B spoke of their perceptions of schooling somewhat differently than children in Program A.

Comments children made about what they liked best about their teacher or what they perceived that a kindergarten teacher should be like were mostly about her appearance and grooming and what the teacher did. Their comments about what was best about her were that "she was pretty; she looked nice; they liked her hair, her shoes, and her dress." Other comments of what they liked about what the teacher did included "being nice to the children; saying nice things to the children, teaching how to read, to do tests, and how to sing; reading stories, teaching about birds, manners, and danger; writing words for the children to read; helping the children to learn how to cook; letting the children play and have recess, being friends with the children; helping children do things and when they had trouble; setting up activities and learning centers for children; making things such as puppets for the children; not yelling at children; keeping children quiet; working after school; doing things she was supposed to do; and having love for the children."

The children mentioned a number of activities that they thought were best in their kindergarten such as, "centers, loft (dramatic, imaginative center), challenge (academic oriented activities), construction (crafts), blocks, editing, science, story, wood-working, water play, reading, painting, writing, sand play, puzzles, testing, and reading by themselves."

The children mentioned that to have a good kindergarten program the children in the program should be nice, good, quiet, friendly, helpful, loving, obedient (listen to the teacher), not fighting and pushing, do the clean-up, and learn new concepts and skills such as reading, writing, and skipping.

The children mentioned that the following things were the elements in their school setting that made them feel happy when they saw them: "the teacher, the animals in the classroom, plants, books, materials, decoration (mobile), children's drawings which were exhibited in class, the teacher's drawings about characters in the stories read in class, carpets and the activities in the classroom."

The children in Program B did not include any negative expressions in their responses to the interview questions. On the contrary, some children directly expressed their perceptions of schooling by using words that described their feelings such as "love," "like," or "fun" when they mentioned their teacher, their kindergarten, their activities, and their friends.

The reasons they gave for why children had to go to school were that "they had to go to school to learn, to have fun, to learn how to read, to get some notes, to learn how to grow up good and be nice, to learn about grade one or in order to go to grade one, and to learn about stories."

What the children thought they had learned from their kindergarten were "how to grow up good, how to read, how to work (such as reading and tests), how to be good so that they could go to grade one, how to play, how to write, singing, math and counting, centers, to play with friends when it's time to play, painting and blocks, and to do homework." (There was no homework in this program.)

The children felt that a good kindergarten program "should have Mrs. B as the teacher; have a good teacher; be a play kindergarten; have lots of love to everyone; have a library, classroom, and schoolwork, let children play a lot and be friends with children; have nice decorations; have some grade one materials; have food, water and healthy children."

Stimulated Recall

While the interview set a frame for the children to respond to what the researcher wanted to gain perspectives about, stimulated recall was used to let the children freely comment on what they had in their minds relevant to their school experiences. The researcher avoided asking the children to say more or asking them specific questions about the photographs they had chosen, as her questions or responses to the children might have influenced the children's further responses. As a result, some children did not really talk about the photographs they had chosen, but rather about what particular events, persons or things related to the events or persons in those photographs.

Many children's responses to the interviews corresponded closely with their verbal responses in the stimulated recall. For example, they tended to choose photographs of the activities which they had mentioned in the interviews as the best things in their kindergarten, or things they had learned in their kindergarten. Other children chose photographs because they found some person such as their mother, their close friend, their favorite toys, or their own picture in those photographs. In either case, the researcher found that not only more depth and breadth was revealed from the children's viewpoint, but the effects of different experiences in their schooling seemed to be further revealed.

The style in which the children in each program responded to the pictures was considerably different.

Children from Program A responded by describing the picture in one or two short sentences. Their description mostly included what or who was in the picture and what they were doing but seldom provided much elaboration. Some typical responses were:

> I like her when she spins (Michelle).
> I like doing the spinning wheel (Isabel).
> I like spinning (Liz).

On the contrary, although a few children from Program B also had this type of response, many of them were quite descriptive, giving more detail. They seemed to associate more with the events that occurred in their classroom.

> I love the food they bring. They talk about

> different countries (Rob).
>
> It's cultural day. I like to have kinds of food and learn about stuff they tell us (Eric).
>
> I like Rubin's cultural day. I like the snack. I like the cereal. I like Rubin's bread. I like the cups that he brings. I like what Rubin is wearing, the Micky Mouse shirt (Darcy).

When presented with the photographs, many children in Program B vividly recalled their experiences and even their feelings at the time the photographs had been taken. The following quotes illustrate this.

> Because she (the teacher) is going to kiss Rubin. He is going to sit on the rug. Every time my Mom hits me (Nancy).
>
> Because the spider. The girl is Nina. She said, "Don't pull out these hands. They will peeled off." She wanted to keep it until the last day (Marlene).

The children in Program B not only described but tried to rationalize the actions of the persons in the photographs or the events that the photographs reminded them of.

> Robert signs in because if we don't sign in we don't know what center we will be in. We should have a sign-in sheet and a sign-in pencil (Rob).
>
> She is reading a story of Watership Down. They don't have The Secret Garden stuff here. (Holly). (The story the teacher was reading during the time when stimulated recall was presented was The Secret Garden but the photograph was taken when she was reading Watership Down.)

Although the children from both programs generally responded by mentioning what their friends in the photographs were doing, only children from Program B gave responses that indicated they were aware of their peers' support and strengths.

> I like it when I can sew it. Carl, when he sews, he always starts it faster than us. Carl does things for us (Dane).
>
> When I go "Wood and Nails," my friends help me make things. You have to know what size I hammer with (Karl).
>
> It's Carl. Every time he made things he put things on his fingers. When I made things, other friends come along to help me. Also some more friends come and make things (Candy).

While all children from Program A and some from Program B described only the actions of the persons in the photograph, some of the children in Program B showed their admiration or focus of interest on the work the persons were doing. Although the photographs had been taken a few months before they were presented to the children, it was interesting to note how much they could still remember about their feelings regarding their friends' work.

> I like Ann's and Darcy's smiles and I like their work (Jane).
>
> I like Ann's writing. Ann likes my picture. I like this bird. Ann is cute (Darcy).
>
> I like Garnet's writing. I like Ann's picture and I like Marlene's writing (Joan).

Some of the children in Program B took active roles in conversations by raising questions or giving remarks to the researcher in addition to the descriptions they gave to the photographs.

> I like Ann and Darcy at the table. Do you know how to write? (Tony).
>
> This is "Clay" (The name of the center.) Look at Chad! Look at what he is doing with the pencil (Nancy).
>
> I like the glasses on Chad. I like the chickadee and the roses and the maps. You like seeing Mrs. B making numbers? (Darcy).

None of the children from Program A had this type of responses.

Children's Drawings

Only the children's verbal responses to their own drawings were analyzed, not their style of drawing. Although the focus was originally on what the children regarded as meaningful school experiences, the researcher found that there were some differences among the responses from the children of different programs in the study.

During the months of observation, the researcher felt that the children in Program B were more active and expressive in any discussions in their classroom than what seemed to occur in Program A. Initially, she thought that this phenomenon occurred because the children in Program A were allowed less time for discussion. However, the children's verbal responses to their drawings seemed to demonstrate different styles of expressing their impressions on their school experiences. Not only did the children from Program B seem to be descriptive as mentioned before, but the language they used to describe their drawings showed how imaginative most of them were and how they did not feel themselves be restricted by adult expectations. Although the children from both programs were given the same direction from the teachers to draw what they liked to do in their kindergarten, their narrations describing their pictures were considerably different.

The children from Program A strictly followed directions and when they described their drawings they were informative rather than descriptive and imaginative. Examples of typical style were illustrated below:

> This is me on the slide. I like spraying the plants and I like playing at the doll center. I like playing with blocks and I like cleaning up and I like reading story (Isabel).
>
> This is the sink. This is me. This is the ground. I am going to water the plant (Sara).
>
> I like playing with blocks. These are blocks. I like to go to the doll center. I like to go to the park, run to the park. I can jump over the fence (Nick).

Most of them drew themselves doing self-directed activities. Only two children drew different themes: one girl drew her brother and herself in the playground and one boy drew an imaginative story he made up about his stuffed toy which he brought to his kindergarten most days.

By contrast, the language most children in Program B used to describe their drawings seemed to be descriptive and imaginative rather than informative. They used more adjectives and adverbs in their sentences and described not only the main ideas but also the descriptive detail of what they mentioned in their picture. While some children from Program B drew self-directed activities, most of those in Program A drew pictures about stories read in class. Writing stories about the pictures the children had drawn was an activity at their writing center, and many of them responded in the stimulated recall that they liked the writing center. These children's responses in their drawing reinforced that they considered composing imaginative stories for their drawings as one of their favorite experiences in their kindergarten.

It has to be noted that the children from Program B had a chance to do the drawings and compose stories as frequently as they wanted to at the writing center or if they did not choose this activity, the teacher would sometime put them in this center once in a while. The children in Program A did not have much chance to do this type of activity. Throughout the observation period, the researcher had seen them do this activity only once when the teacher told them to draw pictures and tell stories about their drawings. Some of them could not find a topic to draw, and the teacher had to help them by giving suggestions such as, "Why don't you draw the doll center?" (Researcher Observation, June 7). This may be due to the fact that children in Program B went on drawing imaginative stories the way as they used to do in class when they were asked to draw the things they liked in their kindergarten in this research, while children in Program A did not. However, some children from Program A gave precise detail of what they drew as shown below:

> This is the people having a party. I like party and I like going outside. I like planting seeds, singing songs, playing with blocks, putting things in my box (Jack, Program A).

The language the children from Program B used seemed to suggest that the extensive literature used in class had a great deal of influence on their story sharing. Many of them started their stories with "once..." or "once there was..." and imitated the narrative style of narration used in literature.

> I like the writing center. I like to write pictures and stories. Once there was a butterfly and it's almost close to the rainbow. The butterfly is going to eat the flowers (Darcy, from a non-English speaking family).
>
> Once there was a rainbow almost on the school. All of a sudden came a happy face on the rabit and a sad face on a butterfly. I like to sew (Joan).
>
> Once upon a time it was raining and then the sun went out. Then the butterfly came and then came the rainbow. Then came people outside to play and some went for a walk out in the wet (Marlene).

Another difference in styling was that children in Program A seldom included background in their drawings or, when they did, they scarcely elaborated on it. In contrast, the children in Program B often included background detail about nature such as the sun, the animals, the stars, the flowers, and the weather.

> These are two flowers and this is a pot. I like dress up. I like making cookies with Mrs. A. (Liz, Program A).
>
> It's me playing with the blocks. It is the butterfly looking at this heart. There is a sun and the little girl is looking at the sun (Eric, Program B).
>
> That's the sink. This is me. This is the ground. I am going to water the plant. (Sara, Program A).
>
> Everybody is inside while the sun shines and it's windy outside. No one comes out 'cause it's too windy. When the wind blows, the sun shines brighter and brighter (Holly, Program B).

Not only were the children's styles different, but the content they presented was also different. The content of what the children described about their drawings included: (a) the children doing self-directed activities, (b) the teacher doing activities, (c) the stories read in class, and (4) the imaginative stories the children made up.

a. The children doing self-directed activities.

All children except one in Program A and only five in Program B had the content of their drawings in this category. The difference was that while all children in Program A drew themselves as the central focus of the pictures doing activities they liked, most children in

Program B either drew about the stories read in class or imaginative stories they composed from their drawings.

> This is the house and this is me building with blocks, playing the king of gnomes (Mail, Program A).
>
> This is a picture of loft. You know what story is in it? The story of the Wizard of Oz. That's the yellow brick road (Carl, Program B).
>
> I am playing in the park with my friends (Kate, Program A).
>
> It's a picture about the Secret Garden. The birds are flying and the flowers are growing (Linda, Program B).

b. The teacher doing activities

Although some of the children in both programs included the teacher in the content of their drawings, they did not do it the same way. The children in Program A did not draw the teacher in their pictures but when describing their drawings, they mentioned the teach~~er doi~~ng activities with them such as:

> This is my brother. He wants me to push him. I like playing on the swing. I like watering the plants. I asked her. She always says "Yes.". I like playing singing games at the circle time (Michelle, Program A).
>
> That is teacher looking on while I am working at wood work table (George, Program A).
> (This child was a grade one pupil moved in from another school. He was sent to attend this kindergarten class in the morning and grade one class in the afternoon due to problems in adjustment to school.)

The children in Program B who included pictures of their teacher in their drawing drew her as the central focus of the picture. All of them drew her reading stories to the children.

> Mrs. B is reading us the story of the Secret Garden. Mrs. B is sitting in the chair reading us the story (Lynn).
>
> Mrs. B is reading a story about the Secret Garden to the kids (Greg).
>
> This is Mrs. B telling us the story outside and it's windy (Nina).

c. The story read in class.

Only the children in Program B drew about the stories read in class as what they liked best in their kindergarten. Some children drew the stories that were read to them since the beginning of the school year but most of them drew about the story of The Secret Garden which was read to them during the last month of the data gathering period.

> I like Charlotte's Web. This is Charlotte catching a bug. She's going to eat it. Wilbur's sad but Charlotte 's his friend (Garnet).
>
> This is a picture of the Secret Garden. Here is the door and the key hole. The key is buried here and there is a mark for the buried treasure. I am not goin g to tell you. My picture is secret (Rob).
>
> This is a secret garden and the bird is sitting in the tree. Mary was watching over the wall watching the chicks to come out. Mary had to go in for dinner (Candy).

d. The imaginative story created by the children.

Only one child from Program A had his drawing in this category while several children from Program B did. Some children used the story read in class as a stepping stone and added some more imaginative parts they created by themselves

> Wendy let go of Peter's hand. Then she fell on a rock. Then Peter saved her. Then she asked a butterfly (Mary, Program B).

Most imaginative stories created by the children from Program B were different from that created by the child in Program A. The child in Program A created the story first and then drew the pictures according to the events in the story. The children in Program B seemed to draw the pictures first and try to create narrative to fit the pictures that they had drawn. Below are the excerpts.

> Gus found a treasure. His guardian angel is guarding him. And then Gus trapped a fairy who gave him the wishes (Robert, Program A).
>
> I saw a rainbow and I saw some flowers and I was smelling the flowers. That smells good. And I saw some balloons flying. I was trying to catch one (Rachelle, Program B).
>
> I was under a butterfly and I didn't see it. A box was outside and I picked it up and someone said, "That's my box (Ann).

Overview

The children's responses to the interview, stimulated recall, and drawings in this study seemed to reveal that these two different programs had different effects on most children's styles of thinking and language. However, the focus of the study was not only to recognize the norms but also the attitudes of children who deviated from the majority. These children who presented themselves differently from their peers often reflected how the teachers or the program dimensions failed to cope with individual needs and let adult perception rule over what each individual child needed. The children's original responses are presented in Appendix D.

The themes in the next section were extracted from the children's reflections presented in Appendix D and supported by the data from the researcher's observations. Each theme described how the children reacted to their school experiences and how the related research viewed similar types of phenomenon.

CHAPTER [illegible]

THEMES EVOLVING FROM THE STUDY

This chapter will develop the themes that evolved from this study. They were extracted from the children's perceptions obtained through the interviews, stimulated recall and picture drawing and are supported by the researcher's observations and reflections. Each of the five themes describe how the children reacted to their school experiences, what the related research had to say about similar types of phenomenon, and the researcher's reflections.

Experiencing Control and Freedom

> All moral culture springs solely and immediately from the inner life of the soul, and can only be stimulated in human nature, and never produced by external and artificial contrivances.
>
> Whenever does not spring from a man's free choice, or is only the result of instruction and guidance, does not enter into his being, but still remains alien to his true nature; he does not perform it with truly human energies, but merely with mechanical exactness.
> (von Humboldt, cited in Condry & Kosloski, 1979, p. 227)

The children's voice, "I like her (the teacher) when she dosn't make me help make dough for the bread." (Michelle, Program A, Interview) may illustrate how freedom and control were so meaningful to the children.

Many incidents from this study revealed that it was not the amount of control the teachers exercised in their class but the ways they used the control over the children and the learning environment that influenced the children's responses. Control in the classroom provided with loving care and empathy from the teacher, that left the children with some control over the situation by giving them choices and alternatives, seemed to be effective in enhancing the children's potential to deal with their learning experiences. Similar results were found by other researchers among both older students and younger ones. Swann and Pittman (1977) found that when children believed that they had a choice about what to play with, they were more intrinsically motivated than the children who believed they had no choice. Zuckerman, Porac, Lathin, Smith, and Deci (1978) found the same results when college students were the subjects. Students who had been given choices about what puzzles to work on and how long to spend working on them, were also more intrinsically motivated than subjects who were assigned the puzzles and time limits to work with.

Logically, it seems that when control is used over the children, the freedom they have will be less. However, evidence from this study revealed some conflicting results. Controls which were handled in positive ways actually tended to allow more freedom for the children, as this helped them avoid conflicts that inevitably would lead to more controls from the teacher over their behavior. Therefore on the mutual relationship between control and freedom lies a strong premise that the children's feelings about them came from positive perspectives about how they were treated.

Experiencing Control

The teachers in this study exercised disciplinary control in a different way:

Controlled by authority

In Program A, the teacher used direct control over the children's behavior by either verbally warning the children not to interrupt or by reprimanding non-verbally. Children were asked to change places with other children or to leave the activity. However, she was not always consistent and sometimes allowed some disruptive behaviors normally reprimanded to pass unnoticed.

The consequence of her practice was that when the child received the warning, he or she stopped the unacceptable behavior for that moment but later started again. Whenever the teacher warned a child verbally, the attention of others in the class was drawn to that child and they often smiled at her or him and they did the same thing not long after the warning. Most of the behaviors the teacher considered disruptive were talking or teasing peers when the teacher was leading activities. However, one child frequently exhibited disrespectful actions toward the teacher such as rolling his tongue and making babbling sounds imitating what she was saying to the class. The teacher just ignored him, pretending she did not hear. In this case, the child stopped after a while even though he had received no reprimand. The usual practice was that once the children had received several warnings about disruptive behaviors, they were removed from the activity and had to sit where the teacher told them to until she allowed them to come back. The teacher seemed to follow Steiner's advice about disciplining in that the teacher should bring to the class "unquestioned authority" when children seemed to be weak in their wills and "their wills would be cultivated" (Steiner, 1964). However, while he also stressed that authority should only be used in a positive way, this was not always so in Program A. For example, when the teacher asked for volunteers to help her prepare the snack, if a child said, "Not me" she would intentionally pick that child. This tended to affect the children's views of their teacher such as, "I like her when she doesn't make me help make the bread." It seems that when the children learned to respect authority from the negative approach, they responded negatively. For instance, many of the children in Program A were very reluctant to get involved when asked for cooperation in formal interviews and stimulated recall. It seemed that they were actually testing adult authority.

On this point Steiner says

> The simple fact is that certain things give the children no pleasure, but they must be done anyway. By handing the children nothing but pleasure, the sense of duty, for example, could not be developed; for this can only be achieved through overcoming obstacles. There would be nothing to gain here. It is not a question then, of "nothing but pleasure," but of gaining the children's love through our pedagogic art, so that under our guidance they even do things they dislike doing, or that even make them suffer a bit. Bring love to your teaching, and if you succeed in inculcating the proper love in the children then something besides joy will develop and you will find loyal affection to the teacher growing in the children. A different feeling arises in the child: for that teacher I will do the hard things too (1982a, p. 58).

If one takes the surface meaning from this excerpt, it seems that the teacher is encouraged to gain the loyal affection of the children so she can use her "unquestioned authority" to guide the children to do even the things they dislike doing. The key words "gaining the children's love through our pedagogic art," needs more elaboration. Steiner also says, "Bring love to your teaching." The "pedagogic art" suggested by Steiner seems to exclude any approaches that create negative responses or feelings from the children. This is what Steiner was suggesting:

> Your task in all this is really to bring into the class the unquestioned authority about which we have still much to say. Otherwise it will happen that whilst you are speaking to one child the others begin to play pranks and to be up to all

> sorts of mischief. And if you are then forced to turn round and give a reprimand, you are lost! Especially with the little children one must have the gift of letting a great many things pass unnoticed.
>
> On certain occasions, it is best to take no notice, but to go on working with the child in a positive way. As a general rule it is very bad indeed to take notice of something that is negative. (1964, p.78)

It seems that although Teacher A followed most of Steiner's suggestions described above, she still missed the essence of how to use control as suggested by Steiner. By letting some negative responses to the children be part of her control over the children's behavior, and because she lacked a "positive way" to get compliance from the children, the children sensitively learned to develop negative views and reactions toward whatever they regarded as authority or controls over them. For example, when asked about what they liked best about their teacher, the children responded by using negative expressions such as, "Nothing" (Robert, Interview) or "When she doesn't get mad" (Kate, Interview). Moreover, the way the children in this program revealed their perceptions toward their schooling reflected how they perceived schooling as a situation where they had to be under control regardless of their own feelings and affection. They seemed to feel obligated to attend the program as demonstrated in their responses such as, kids go to school because, "Mommy wants them to." (Isabel, Interview) or "The teacher wants to teach them" (Liz, Interview). These responses to the concept of schooling were not related to voluntary actions on the parts of the children as the responses from children in Program B were. The responses from children in Program B seemed to represent a wider perspective of schooling and reflect more about the children's own feelings such as, "It's a lot of fun" (Mary); "because I like kindergarten" (Rob, Interview); and "to learn how to read and grow up good and be nice" (Joan, Interview). Because none of the children in Program B elicited any negative expressions relating to their perceptions of schooling, while some of the children in Program A did, it is likely that the different teaching approaches of using authority in these two programs might be substantial to the way the children perceived their school experiences.

Controlled by affection

In Program B the teacher used a strategy similar to that outlined by Steiner. She used a positive approach which emphasized creating intimacy between herself and the children. While both teachers were using the same method of control, their strategies were quite different. For example, they both would place the child who started to be inattentive and disturb his peers during a teacher-directed actvity near the teacher to prevent the child from getting out of hand. However, Teacher A would lead the child by pulling his or her hand to sit or stand beside her without giving any verbal responses. Even so, the children seemed to understand why they were handled in that manner. In Contrast, Teacher B took this opportunity to create intimacy between herself and the child by verbally expressing her urgent needs for the child's support when placing him or her beside the teacher such as asking the child to warm her feet or to hold something for her. The children did not seem to perceive this action as a way to correct their behavior, nor as a reward for undesirable behavior, but rather valued it as a privilege to have physical contact with their teacher. It seemed that when the children perceived themselves as somebody who became important in the teacher's eyes and those of their classmates, they tended to behave to meet the expectations and discipline themselves according to the roles they perceived themselves to have.

> Rob started to have an argument with Lynn when the teacher was introducing language games about rhyming. The teacher mentioned that her feet needed to be warmed and needed Rob's help. Rob's face became brightened and he loyally put both his hands on the teacher's feet. The expression on his face and the way he held the teacher's feet seemed to show his pride in himself as a valuable person whose value had been recognized by the authority.
> (Researcher's observation, May 14, 1985)

> When I first saw the teacher asking the children to warm her feet when they began to be inattentive or disruptive to the class, I sort of had negative feelings against what the teacher did and perceived this action as dehumanizing or tricking the

> children. Later on, I began to change my feelings because the children seemed to enjoy doing this and regard this as an honor to them. Every morning many children asked the teacher whether they could have a chance to warm her feet or not. Moreover, I noticed that the children did not try to be disruptive to get attention. Instead, they tried to keep their status as being recognised to be 'special' by the teacher and participated extremely well throughout the rest of the period. Today, the look on Rob's face made me rethink my prejudice against Teacher B's tactics. Teacher A was so honest with her feelings and the children while Teacher B seemed to use a lot of praise and recognition and automatically gained the children's affection. The question is: What is more important? The children feeling good about themselves and their school experiences or the teacher feeling good about her being honest?
> (Researcher's field journal, May 14, 1985)

Teacher B used a variety of tactics by using positive reinforcement such as saying, "I like the way Nina is listening attentively and keeps her hands to herself, it shows that she is mature for her age." While the children might not understand clearly what mature meant, the context in the sentence gave positive meaning about "mature." It also conveyed the message that the children who were not attending were not included in the group the teacher was praising. From observations, it seemed this type of remark could correct the children's undesired behaviors abruptly. For example, a child who was teasing the child next to him quickly pulled his hand back and sat up straight, looking at the teacher attentively although his name was not mentioned in the comment. Nina, the girl who was used as a model, also became radiant with pride and seemed to be even more attentive.

Teacher B's approach seems to be based on a belief that the children were sensitive enough to pick up on clues the teacher wanted them to. This approach eliminated the need for the children to protect themselves from being picked on by reacting in negative ways as a means of getting back at the authority. Another example of Teacher B's approach is how she had the children walk in a line to other places in the school. She would have the children pretend to be one of the characters in the stories acting in some way that required the children's total concentration. For example, she might asked them to be a rat who had a lame leg and whose mouth was full of food. There was little opportunity for conflict, and much time was saved because the children joyfully turned into rats in this make-believe episode. As a result, the teacher could proceed her teacher directed activities with very few or sometimes no inattentive responses from the children.

Control seems to be effected mostly by the teacher's attitudes toward her relationships with the children and the attitudes the children had toward her in return. Mutual love and respect for each other seems to be the key. If the teacher respected the children's ability to receive the message she conveyed without direct confrontation, the children, in turn, respected the teacher's guidance and clues. However, much of the incentive for the children's respect of Teacher B seemed to come from their love for her. The children never ceased to show their affection and trust for their teacher. From the researcher's field notes and field journal reflections on what had been observed in the study, there were many pages commenting on this evidence. For example:

> When the snack was almost over, the teacher came to sit at her armchair. Some children went to chat with the teacher ... A girl took some raisins and asked the teacher to share with her. The other children started to do the same. A child sat on the arm of the chair and hugged the teacher. A boy came to bargain about something personal I could not hear well. It was a lovely picture that I haven't seen in any kindergarten I visited before. I have a feeling that the children have deep feelings of intimacy for their teacher. She didn't give them only contentment for their academic growth but also the warmth that nourishes their souls and the effects showed through the children's radiant faces when interacting personally with the teacher.
>
> (Researcher's observation, May 7, 1985)

> Why were the children so very fond of their teacher in this way? When the children were going home and the teacher was standing in the hall way, they kissed her goodbye. In the morning when they first saw the teacher in class, they often commented that they liked her clothes, her hair, and her jewelry. She was asked to pull out a little girl's loose tooth. The girl proudly showed me her missing tooth and said that her teacher was the best dentist. When they had problems such as their parents had a fight or some conflicts from home, they always opened up to the teacher in class. I had a feeling that the teacher had won the children's hearts, and also their trust.
>
> (Researcher's diary, June 10, 1985)

The children's affection towards the teacher was so meaningful to the children that they even reflected it in their make believe play.

> The pretend teacher also corrected the answers and some of her correction was wrong but there was no protest from the pretend students. When the book was over, one pretend student started to make comments on the teacher and the others followed. "I like your pants, teacher." "I like your ears, teacher." I have my eye infection, teacher. This is the first infection in my life." When the game was over, the pretend students hugged the teacher and said, "Teacher, teacher."
> (Researcher's observation, April 10, 1985)

The remarkable phenomenon is that the children used positive comments for the teacher the same way as the teacher did to them. They also perceived the teacher as somebody with whom they could share their personal problems and exchange their intimate feelings. This seemed to affect the children's perceptions about the teacher as the one who possessed "unquestioned authority" for whom they had "affectionate loyalty." A child's own words may illustrate her deep feeling toward her teacher as she gave her teacher a hug and a kiss after story time and said, "I want to look after you, Mrs. B." (Marlene, June 19).

In conclusion, controls used in kindergarten classroom seem to be most effective only when the negative element is avoided. The positive approach can reach its fullest potential only when the teacher has won the children's affection and loyalty by sharing intimacy and trust with the children.

Experiencing Freedom

Because the two programs were based on different beliefs and approaches, the impact they had on the children's freedom seem to be contrary.

Freedom for the self to grow

The freedom of the child 's own self to grow has been an issue of discussion. Is society robbing children of childhood and resulting in immature adolescents who grow up with emotional disturbances and personality disorders? (Elkind, 1982). Elkind has presented his views based on his observations on dramatic real-life phenomena and research. He points out that "psychologists and psychiatrists recognize that emotions and feelings are the most complex and intricate part of development. Feelings and emotions have their own timing and rhythm and cannot be hurried" (Elkind, 1982, p. 11). The pressure from society and parents to reinforce that children grow up fast in their language, thinking, and behavior, along with the pressure for early achievement and success results in many children adopting a negative attitude when they enter adolescence.

Steiner emphasizes that every child should have the freedom, as a growing human being, to be "on the voyage of discovery and self discovery" (Edmunds, 1979, p. 17). The goal is

> to aid children so that as men and woman they may bring their powers, their own innate and sacred human qualities, to greater fulfilment. It is the education which serves the freedom of the human spirit.
>
> (Edmunds, 1979, p. 17)

The teacher's approach in Program A that avoided introducing any intellectual subjects or concepts to the children stemmed from the intention not to bombard the children with ready-made concepts and artificial understanding that would jeopardize the "development of human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives" (Steiner, in Grunelius, 1974, p.48). The intention to avoid giving ready made patterns for the development of the child's personality and respect for the freedom of the child's self to take time to grow healthily came from Steiner's principles emphasizing that education should assist the best there is in the child to reach free expression.

Among the persons who interpreted Steiner's principles, Grunelius, the first kindergarten teacher of the first Waldorf school kindergarten (von Baravalle in Grunrlius, 1974, p. 3) seems to give the most precise elaboration of how a teacher should deal with the issue of freedom given in school experiences for young children. She points out how control could jeopardize the children's freedom to develop their inner qualities as follows:

> A static element in education can also take on the form of giving orders. If a child has become used to waiting for orders before he acts, his action will take on a note of automatic compliance and passivity. Or the child develops an attitude of being chronically on the defensive. He rebels against being moulded into a prescribed pattern. He opposes interference as he subconsciously aims to find the good and beautiful and true in life out of his inner need for them.
>
> When a child senses that he is no longer subjected to constant pressure for action in a prescribed and expected manner, it is surprising to see how readily and freely he attunes himself to his surroundings. How different then is a child who is sparkling with initiative, whose eyes shine when he has done the right thing! (p. 46-47).

What Grunelius said was strongly supported by the evidence in this study discussed previously under "control." The children who got warnings for interruptive behaviors from Teacher A still went on misbehaving and the situation became even worse when the teacher's reaction evidently drew attention from the other children and they started to imitate the offensive behavior. On the other hand, Teacher B did not prescribe what she wanted the children to do, but rather hinted at what she thought would be model behavior and allowed the children to be free to attune themselves to what they perceived was the right thing to do. However, the control used by Teacher B in this way was so powerful that the molds of behaviors the teacher tactfully made for the children's behavior were also ready-made. The children's "self" could not take time to grow in the process of self-discovery and re-discovery. As a result, they grew too fast to be "mature", in the sense of imitating the actions and thinking of adults. Perhaps they had lost their precious childhood too soon. While the children in Program A were still naive, playing at testing authority childishly with the teacher and other adults, finding it impossible to sit still too long, the children in Program B could discipline themselves so well that they could even tolerate boring lectures from parent speakers for almost half an hour without any disruptive behaviors and could participate in discussions in a sophisticated manner. Only a few of the younger children showed restlessness by wriggling their legs restlessly and letting their eyes wander around the room aimlessly instead of focusing on the speakers as they usually did when the stories were interesting. These so-called well-behaved children were tamed in the mold of adulthood to be very self-disciplined, empathetic and sophisticated but at what expense? The time that they could enjoy the sweet freedom to let their "selves" grow as a child, freely express their emotions, feelings, and thinking in a childish way was much lessened, compared with the children in Program A. Although the approaches Teacher B used were so effective that the children willingly entered the mold, and had all the fine qualities supposed to be the foundation of success in schooling and their future lives, there was little place for the children's own selves to freely form their own identity. Their childhood was eroded. The personality traits that grow not from within but from outer conditions, such as for exchange of love and acceptance from adults whom the children admire, may not be as strong as those that grow gradually from experiencing, discovering, and rediscovering their own desires, needs, and aspirations without imposition from others. The practice of "the earlier, the better" seems to rob the children of time to really grow up as a "child."

The children in Program A, while still childish, egocentric and lacking in behavioral traits considered to be necessary for a sophisticated and successful adult, did have a lot more time to freely discover their own selves. Given time, the creative faculties and flexibilities of the child's mind should be allowed to reach their fullest potential, resulting in a strong mature self.

Many questions arise. For instance, are time factors and freedom the most important things in the process of developing strong mature self for children?

How do we determine if the child is developing his or her self in a way that may hinder school success and later life?

Does presenting models or expectations from adults jeopardize the children's freedom to develop their own self-identity or personality?

Karnes and Lee (1979) point out that it seems clear from the imitation literature, children acquire new responses from observing and modeling the behaviors of others. There are also indications that children selectively model those who perform responses more effectively (Strichart, 1974).

According to Lewin (1931), behavior is a function of the interaction between the person and the environment, and children's interaction with their immediate environment should be taken more into consideration. Dodge (1978) and Kritchevsky and Prescott (1969) also agree that environmental design helps manage behaviors. Therefore, the position that early interaction with a stimulating environment is crucial for development (Bloom, 1964; Deutsch,1966; Hunt, 1961) is taken into consideration. The environment and the interactions of the children in Program A and of those in Program B may result in different effects on the children's personality development. However, it may not be fair to be judgmental that the children in Program B lost their freedom to develop their own personality because of the strong environmental control resulting from the approach and environemntal design in Program B. When we compare the controls used in the two programs, it is remarkable that both programs used different types of controls. In Program A, direct control was used, whereas in program B indirect control was used. As a result, the freedom the children gained was of a different type. In Program A, the freedom the children had to develop their personality came from presenting a less stimulating environment and also giving less modeling to the children. In Program B the freedom the children had came from having choices to develop their personality in a highly stimulating environment and conscious modeling. The teacher not only presented herself as an active thinker and doer, but also made the environmental design so inviting that the children were emotionally captured and yielded themselves to the mold of personality she designed for them.

What Teacher B did was to let the children know her expectations, but at the same time make the children believe that it was their own choice to fulfil her expectations. With her strong intimate relationship with the children, she enticed the children to desire to adopt what was expected as their own. In this sense, the children had little chance to free their selves from her influence, and the inner quality of their souls seemed to be dependent on the teacher's influence rather on the indefiniteness emerging from their own beings.

The irony is that the more the teacher expressed her viewpoint about whatever came into their interests during discussions or activities, the children equally expressed their views and seemed to reveal more about their perceptions in life. The teacher then had a better chance to understand the children's needs and difficulties, and the process of harmonizing these elements for each individual child seemed to become more objective.

Childhood is supposed to be the sweetest period of human life, free from burdens. The idea to let the child enjoy childhood as a child, not as a miniature adult, is the ideal but very difficult to put into practice in an industrial materialistic society. While the children in Program A never mentioned their family problems, the children in Program B often mentioned their worries and personal problems. For example, a child mentioned that he would not be able to get married because it would be difficult to find a girl of his own religion. Another mentioned that he did not want to get married because he did not want to give money to his wife. Another child described a horrible scene when his parents had a physical fight. Another child mentioned death in her family and the grief the family was experiencing. Another child mentioned his worry about kidnapping. These topics reflected the real world the children were facing. Teacher B became part of the children's lives and gave emotional comfort and emotional outlets for them to express their true feelings. She sometimes turned serious matters into a childish light-hearted conversation by saying, "Come on! you promised to marry me" (April 22, 1985) when a boy said he also did not want to have any wife when he grew up. The children expressed their true feelings because they had freedom and opportunities. On the contrary, Teacher A tried to protect the children from stress and strain by avoiding discussion of those topics that seemed to be individual children's emotional problems. For example, when a girl mentioned visiting her father in prison, the teacher abruptly covered it up and changed the topic. Therefore, the children in Program A seemed to have little opportunity to make sense of their life experiences that might have disturbed them and to get emotional support when they could not get it from home. From this perspective, the approach in Program A might be valuable, if there could be a guarantee that the home environment would be stress-free and the children would never be subject to environmental problems. However, because there was no guarantee, and some children did have things that bothered them such as death, sickness, or separation from the ones they loved, or confusion, their selves would lack the opportunity to grow and be nurtured if they could not healthily relate their feelings to their cognition. On the opposite side, the approach used in Program B might have a tendency to erode a fair amount of childhood, as the rich interactive environment of the school accelerated their personality toward being a mature adult type. However, the children's selves seemed to be well nurtured by the warmth and opportunities the teacher gave to them to really make sense of whatever came to their lives. The freedom for the children's selves to grow seems to be limited by program designs and should be balanced by the nurturing elements provided for emotional support to the children.

Freedom of choices

The children's perspectives of schooling seemed to depend very much on the freedom of choices they had in their school experiences. When children felt that they had choices, they created more self-initiated learning; when having no choices, they had to accept other-initiated learning. These two forms of learning are different in their process and their outcomes and one is not compatible with the other (Condry & Koslosky, 1979).

Condry & Koslosky (1979) contended that self-initiated learning is driven by intrinsic motivation. They reviewed a number of recent studies and concluded that when a person chooses to engage in a task, his behavior during the task is more coherent and his subsequent interest in the task remains higher than that of a comparable individual pressured into doing the same task. The authors point out:

> Perhaps we need to take a different view of the child in the educational system. The child we hope to educate is complex, coherent, and eager to learn about the world. Therefore, instead of asking how one might manipulate a disinterested child so as to motivate him or her to learn, the

> question might rather be how we may arrange the environment of education so as to take advantage of the child's natural curiosity and his intrinsic interest in learning about the world. Before the child enters school, they acquire a vast range of knowledge about the world. They were not trained to acquire this information in the sense of being supervised, scheduled, rewarded, and punished; they used their own native, intellective capacities. This interest did not have to be 'encouraged' for the most part; it was there, within, all along (p. 243).

Condry and Kosloski's viewpoint was supported by studies from many researchers such as Bower (1974) and Stevenson (1970). Bower (1974) reported that even young infants can detect environmental regularity, whereas Stevenson (1970) found that children are able to learn the correct responses to a probability task in which reinforcement follows the correct responses only some, rather than all, of the time. This study showed that when adults have trust in the children's capability to acquire knowledge and skills and allow them to be involved in self-initiating learning, the results in intrinsic motivation tend to become strong, as observed in the responses from the children in Program B.

In Program B, the children could make their own choice to either terminate the work they were assigned to do when their interest waned and come back later on, or to stay with the task as long as they wanted to. The children also were able to choose among various activities within each center according to their interests. Therefore, the nature of the activities turned out to be self-directed which in turn resulted in self-initited learning. Examples of how the children felt about their learning can be illustrated by their comments, "I like how we learn. Mrs. B teaches us" (Carl, in response to the question, "What is best in your kindergarten?"); "Because I like kindergarten" (Rob, in response to the question,"Why do kids come to kindergarten?"); "I like the things we do in the classroom" (Ann, in response to the question, "What are the things you see in your classroom and you really like there?"); "Ann and Darcy are writing. Ann and Darcy are smiling. Darcy is nice in the picture. It's fun writing" (Joan, stimulated recall); "I like Mary smiling. I like the job they have been doing" (Jane, stimulated recall). These children gained pleasure from their learning experiences and those experiences became intrinsically rewarding. Even the tasks that seemed to be too academic for kindergarteners seemed to be enjoyable to them as they responded, "I like drawing pictures and I like to learn how to print" (Eric, stimulated recall); "I like editing. You get to copy stuff" (Linda, stimulated recall); "I like the centers. I like challenge. I got two of them"(Ann, stimulated recall).

In Program A, the children had no choices when it came to tasks required by the teacher. If they were behind their peers, they had to use extra time deducted from play time or recess to finish the task. The nature of the tasks were teacher-directed activities with little initiative allowed for the children. This type of learning fell into the "other-initiated" learning type which, according to Condry and Kosloski (1979), is less effective than the self-initiated type. During free play time, although the children had free choice to do whatever they wanted to, the choices were limited to repetition of the same play due to lack of materials and experiences being added throughout the year.

Having Emotional Experiences of Schooling

Some children in Program A responded to their schooling by saying that they went to school because "Mom wants them to" or "The teacher wanted to teach them" while some children in Program B thought that going to school was "to have fun," or "to learn how to grow up good and be nice." It seemed that the children from Program B revealed their perceptions of schooling as something that gave them pleasurable experiences. On the contrary, those children from Program A had an impression that schooling was what the other persons wanted them to have, not the things they had any postive emotion for. Emotional experiences defined by Forgel (1980) means "The actual feelings a person has in relation to attitudes, concepts, persons or events" (p. 1) Forgel contended that emotional experiences have a profound effect on the outcomes of education. Any novel situations which the children experience during school days may evoke strong emotional reactions such as boredom, wonder, excitement, anger, joy, and frustration. The way in which the teachers handled these reactions in the two kindergarten programs in the study seemed to greatly affect the children's perceptions of their schooling.

In this study, the emotional reactions that the children revealed seemed to be related to their learning experiences. Although the children had a great many good times in both programs, when they reflected on their feelings toward their programs, the responses to each program were quite different. While children from Program B reflected positive attitudes and joy over their school experiences such as "My school has lots of fun. There are lots of toys to play. Mrs. B and Susan are very good teachers" (Mary, Conversation with the reseacher, Program B), children from Program A reflected discontent about theirs such as "Nothing is good in my kindergarten" (Sara, Interview, Program A). From observations, the entire learning atmosphere in these two program were considerably different. The most outstanding difference seemed to be that Program B had more variety in activities and approaches to introduce learning experiences to the children, while Program A tended to have more repetition of activities. In Program B, the learning centers were rearranged and new materials or activities were gradually added almost every week. The display on the bulletin board and the decorations in the classroom were regularly changed over a month's period. Each story in the story time lasted about a month, but because it was a chapter story, new plots and events in the story held the children's interest until it was over. The locations of the centers were sometimes rearranged, and new centers were added in place of old ones that had been temporarily removed so as to minimize boredom. On the other hand, most things in Program A tended to remain constant. The bulletin board was seldom changed. The centers and material or toys at each center were the same throughout the year. The same story was read or told repeatedly over the period of a week. The same craft project sometimes lasted for weeks. The children sang the same morning greeting and ritual songs, such as the song before story time and painting time, throughout the year.

Kagan, Kearsly and Zelado (1978) said that children from age zero to five years became interested in new information only when it was moderately discrepant from past experience. If the event was too familiar or identical to what the children had experienced before, the children would not attend to it. If the event was too novel or completely unfamiliar, the children would attend to it but not for very long. This is reinforced by Jacob (1984) who stated, in his interpretation of Piaget's theory that knowledge can be a personal appropriation, with each student assimilating aspects of his or her educational experience in a personal way. Children create meaning by relating the new to the old, by relating that which they are trying to understand to that which they already understand. Jacob contended that "active education lies in the continual effort on the part of the educator to provide students with educational opportunities that match their interests and their cognitive abilities" (p. 71). Inappropriately selected educational materials may lead to rote learning if the material is above the student's conceptual level, or to boredom if the material is below that level. Experiences that encourage by having meaningful interaction with the environment seem to play the most important part in active learning.

When Montessori started to work with slum children, she found that children loved to do the same tasks again and again with the didactic or self correcting materials that she introduced (Montessori, 1914). However, the premise underlying this notion is that, in the Montessori program, the child is able to pursue his or her own interests. Although the directress provides some material at appropriate times, the child was also free to select and solve problems without any interference (Montessori, 1914).

Even though the child's experiences with using the same didactic or self-correcting materials were identical, each of the children gained a sense of competence and accomplishment because they were working at their own level. The emotional experience that the child gained was so powerful to her or him that the child kept repeating the same activity so as to enjoy that emotional experience again and again. Another phenomenon about young children preferring familiar experiences was shown in Hayden's study (1985). She contended that the reason children indicate their desire to get back to carry on with reading familiar books, and therefore encourage their parents to do so, is that as they know the familiar story, are aware of the characters and the episodes which take place within the text, they become keen to get back on task to have another opportunity to demonstrate their competence.

What Hayden (1985) pointed out raised a question as to whether repetitive behaviors occur because of children's preference for repetitive activities or because of the opportunity to demonstrate their competence. Perhaps the latter gives them so much pleasure and sense of achievement that they wish to go back to the same task or same story.

From an adult's perspective it may appear on the surface that children enjoy, or at least do not mind, repetition of tasks and concepts. However, we may be overlooking the reason behind the repetitive behaviors.

Children in both the Montessori program and the bedtime story episode were not forced to repeat an activity but made their choices as a result of their interest which may have arisen from the positive emotional experiences they gained from being involved with those particular materials or stories. It is a different situation when an adult requires repetition with little or no regard for the children's emotional responses.

When Teacher A presented the stories or the singing games and kept repeating them several times, she believed she was doing it in the children's best interests so that the children would learn by being exposed to the same thing again and again. From my observations, this was only successful when there was a match between the children's interests and the activities given. However, it was impossible to get all the children interested in the same thing at the same time or in the same way so they could personally relate to the activities. It seemed that when there was no variation in approaching the same thing, the children not only showed no interest but also demonstrated some frustration when forced to participate in the activities. This excerpt illustrates what was happening.

> The teacher was reading the same story for the third day. Most girls were attentive and Kate started to say ahead what was going to happen in the story while the teacher was telling the story. The teacher was a good storyteller and tried to

> tell the story exactly in the same manner as what had been told before. However, many of the boys might not be interested in the story and started to become restless. James turned his face to Robert who sat next to him and poked his elbow at Robert. The teacher stopped and gave a reprimand look at him without saying anything. James got the message and stopped for a few seconds and then started to turn to the other side and made a face at his friend. Some children looked at him and some giggled. The teacher said that she preferred not to have any interruption. However, the children seemed to be more restless and the teacher had to stop from time to time to warn them not to create any interruptions until the story ended.
> (Researcher's observation, March 22, 1985)

When trying to delve into the causes of differences between the majority of the children's overt behaviors in the two programs, it seems important to point out the necessity of keeping a balance between familiar and discrepant activities to the children's past experiences. This may explain why the children in Program B seemed to have a much longer listening attention span than those in the other. In Program B a story introduced new events each day through the involvement of the same characters. The children gradually identified themselves and the persons they knew in their lives with the heroes in the story and the adventures they were involved in. Hence all the characters became the children's acquainted persons who shared with them interesting experiences of their lives. The discrepancy of the events in the story heightened the children's excitement, while identification with main characters provided familiarity. This resulted in an increased attention span for listening

The importance of affective experience as a major factor that influences human behavior has been supported even in the medical field. The Edmonton Journal (Chalmer, 1986) reported the approach of Dr. Bernard Siegel, a surgeon and the 1988 president-elect of the American Holistic Medical Association. Dr. Siegel said,

> Folk wisdom has always known about 'mind over matter', but scientific studies now have found chemical and neuro-logical links between states of mind and the working of organs, glands and the immune system.
>
> Unfortunately, most physicians were trained to practise 'detached concern' and don't believe their emotions - or the patient's - make much difference. (Chalmers, p. A1)

From stimulated recall, most children from both programs tended to describe only what were in the pictures. However, some children included recollections about the events in the pictures or expressed their feelings or opinions, which indicated that the children from each program had different responses toward their school experiences. Most responses from Program A were in short sentences and added little of cherished memories about their school experiences. Some typical examples are, "We play in the castle" (Ali, stimulated recall, Program A.); " We play dress up" (Kate, stimulated recall, Program A); " I like water play" (James, stimulated recall, Program A). Very few responses showing strong feelings arose from the children's memories. "I like it when she (the teacher) sometimes plays with me" (Michelle, stimulated recall, Program A); "James is helping Miss A. Sometimes I helped her" (Jack, stimulated recall, Program A).

A point has to be made that although most responses from the children in Program A in stimulated recall were rather short and did not give much detail, it seemed that when something reminded them of meaningful experiences, their responses seemed to be longer, expressing their feelings and memories. For example, Michelle gave "I don't know" responses for four questions in the interview and gave mostly only one short sentence for each picture in the stimulated recall such as "I like it when she sometimes plays with me" (Photograph #14, teacher directed activities); "I like her when she spins" (Photograph #2, teacher directed activities); "I like puppet show" (Photograph #6, child directed activities). She responded in detail to the photograph where either her mother was in the pictures or where they were connected with her mother's words. She not only described why she chose the pictures but also mentioned what the photographs reminded her of as follows.

> I like my Mommy in this picture. At school I never have a chance to play with the blocks because there are always someone there (Photograph #1, child directed activities).
>
> I like the picture about my Mom again. I like to play with the little truck near the cubby

(Photograph #3, child directed activities).

> I like the puppet named Micheal. She is talking in French. I like to be in French immersion program so I learn French (Photograph # 4, teacher directed activities).

From these excerpts, it seems that the children tended to respond more and reveal their memories more when they had something relating their personal emotions with those experiences. Responses from the children from Program B seemed to demonstrate this viewpoint. The responses from many children in this program in the stimulated recall tended to give longer descriptions of what was happening and included some clues of positive emotional ties they had toward their school experiences. Some typical responses that fell into this category are, "I like what the Carrots are doing. I did good testing today" (Nancy, stimulated recall, Program B); "Chad looks funny. She is tracing. It's fun" (Rachelle, stimulated recall, Program B); " She learns how to do special things. We learn how to do the tests. I like testing" (Eric, stimulated recall, Program B). When they described the pictures, they recall even small details of what was happening at the time even though it had happened months ago. Some typical responses that fall into this category are as follows:

> That's Roland's cultural day. They talked about Scotland and I like the music. His parents came from Scotland (Garnet).

> Because of the spider. The girl is Nina. She

> said, "Don't pull out these hands. They will peel of. She wanted to keep it until the last day (Marlene).

> She said, "We should be careful with the legs." She made a mask puppet and that's Wilbur (Rob).

> We are sitting in a circle and there is no noise. That's all (Nina).
> (This photograph was taken when the children became real quiet after the teacher pretended to stop talking abruptly as a signal to remind the children to pay attention to what she said.)

In Program A, although from observations, the children seemed to enjoy most of their school activities, there were no verbal responses from either the interview or stimulated recall mentioning strong impressions similar to those from Program B as shown in the excerpts above. A point that needs to be made is that the activities mentioned by children from Program B seemed to be very sophisticated for kindergarten level, while in Program A play was the dominant program dimension. Therefore, how positive feelings can be created toward school experiences seemed not to depend solely on the activity itself but rather the approach and interactions the children had with the persons sharing the experiences with them.

Perceiving the Teacher's Role

The children in each program commented on many similar factors in their feelings about their teachers. Sometimes it seemed to be lack of a certain trait that was significant to the children.

The commonality underlining the responses from the children about their feelings toward their teacher is discussed in this section.

The Teacher's Grooming

The reason many children in Program B (Linda, Roland, Garnet, Ann, Rob, Holly) responded about the teacher's appearance and grooming while only one child in Program A (Mail) did, seems to disclose one of the ways children look at their teacher's qualities. The evidence that many children in Program B responded to the teacher's grooming seemed to show that the children were alert to their teacher's appearance, and were attracted to the fashionable type. The children might not consider this quality very important, or might not mind if their teacher's grooming was conservative, as evidenced by most children in Program A having no comments about their teacher's appearance, but they still tended to be sensitive to it and consider it as one factor they liked about their teacher.

The Teacher's Interaction with the Children

What was most important to the children in both programs seems to be the teacher's interaction with them.

In Program A, the children's responses about what they liked best about their teacher were (a) Doing activities with them such cleaning up or planting (Liz, Ali); (b) Teaching them, arts, and songs (Wallis, Jack, James); (c)

Making good snacks (George); (d) Talking nicely (Isabel). There were also some responses given in a negative form as (a) When she didn't get mad (Kate); (b) When she didn't make the children help preparing snack (Michelelle); (c) Nothing is best (Robert).

In Program B, most children responded that the things they liked best about their teacher besides her appearance were: (a) The teacher reading stories (Rachelle, Rubin, Nancy, Carl, Tony, Marlene, Joan, Lynn, Candy, Holly); (b) The teacher teaching well, teaching a lot of things, teaching how to read (Joan, Karl, Jane, Eric, Greg); (c) The teacher helping them or giving them support (Darcy, Dane, Candy, Mike); (d) The teacher playing with them or letting them go for recess (Karl, Garnet); (e) The teacher letting them go to centers (Nina); (f) The teacher making things for them and she liked them (Dane). However, Teacher B's story reading and teaching involved continual interaction with individual children as she moved around the learning centers. During the story time, although it was a group activity, the interaction between the teacher and the children was based on mutual interest, and much of the time was spent in shared discussion.

Why did all the children in Program A have little significant impression of the teacher during group time activities, while in Program B it was the opposite? I believe the factor underlying this phenonenon is the difference between the amount of time the teachers spent with individual children during the group activities. Children in Program B received individual attention which was based on their voluntary interests no matter if it was a group time activity or center time.

In Program A, group time activities such as circle time, story, arts and crafts, had little teacher-individual child interaction. The teacher gave instructions or demonstrated but in the sense that she had the children do the actvities in a mass. Although the teacher interacted with each child such as choosing the lead dancers and helping them paste the cut-outs, the interactions were on a physical level rather than a mental-emotional level.

One of the factors that engendered the children's positive feelings toward their teacher was that they received her attention on the mental-emotional level which gave them the feeling that the teacher was doing the activity with them, rather than making them do the activity.

It seemed that the interactions of the teacher with the children played an integral part in influencing the children's perception of her roles. During the interviews the children revealed their sensitive feelings about the teacher and exposed what they felt were the most meaningful roles of a kindergarten teacher. The following comments illustrated this. "Sometimes clean up with us" (Liz, interview, Program A); "Because she made good snack" (George, interview, Program A); "She teaches us nice and she is nice, very nice. She plays with us a lot of time. She played Duck Duck Goose." (Karl, interview, Program B); "She is a nice teacher. She reads the book every time. She helps us cook and she writes us stories. We love her. She is doing some work for us" (Candy, Program B).

Very few studies have examined students' concepts of what teachers are like (Weinstein, 1983). Katz (1981) defines the teacher's role as aspects of behavior that concern the responsibility, duties, and functions expected of a teacher by students.

Children from Program A viewed the teacher more as a provider. The roles of the teacher they perceived included (a) providing care of the child such as preparing snack and giving them good food; (b) providing care of the environment such as taking care of plants, setting the table, and buying toys for the class; and (c) introducing new ideas and activities such as reading stories, telling children about things they did not know and teaching them craft projects and songs.

Children in Program B viewed their teacher less as a provider but more as a learning facilitator who gave them activities and educational materials. To quote the children, she "made activities for children," "made puppets," "make learning centers". She provided them support by doing learning tasks with them such as, "let children have fun at centers and recess," "write words for children to read," "sang with the children," and "help children do things." The children perceived her roles as (a) arranging activities for children; (b) preparing educational materials and teaching aids; and (c) having active and supportive interactions with children.

Children from program A seemed to percieve their teacher more as one who gave them physical comfort. When Kate (Program A) was asked, "What should a teacher do to make a good kindergarten teacher?" she replied, "Teacher be nice to the kids. Don't treat them bad and give them food." Many other children in this program seemed to share the same perspective. Sara also thought that to be a good kindergarten teacher the teacher should "give food to the kids." When George was asked about what he thought was best about his teacher, he said, "She made good snack," while Nick said "She did nice things and she was not noisy." Robert thought that the teacher's role was "Pick fruit. Planting whole bunch of plants and transplant things," while Isabel mentioned, "Sing songs and give them food" as what a good kindergarten teacher should do. Although it was obvious that the children liked Teacher A's cooking and appreciated her being nice to them, they failed to mention any interactions relating to emotional support received from her as what impressed them as being a good kindergarten teacher.

On the contrary, although the children from Program B mentioned food as something they liked in their stimulated recall (Nancy, Ann, Rob, Eric, Holly), they did not relate having food as something special from their ~~teacher,~~ but mentioned mostly the meaningful interactions they received from her as a quality that a good kindergarten should have. For example, "Treat us nice. Help us when we have troubles. Talk to us nice" (Carl); "Learn kids. Love children and everybody loves everybody else" (Mary). However, some children indicated that having food in kindergarten was the experience they enjoyed; for example, Nancy responded to a photograph of a cultural day, "I like Rubin's cultural day. Every time I like it. I like what they bring to eat." Marlene was another child who mentioned having food as her favorite experience in kindergarten. She responded that what she learned from school were "to learn how to read, to do homework (when was asked by the researcher whether she had any homework, she replied that they do it in grade one), to read with Mrs. B stories," and also added her last comment, "I like it when it's snack time." However, when she was asked what was best about her teacher, she responded proudly that the teacher had pulled her teeth out, and repeated three times that her teacher was nice, very nice. This response revealing the relationships between Teacher B and the children came from the stimulated recall when she responded to the photograph of Teacher B talking to a boy in front of the class

> Mrs. B wanted to kiss that boy. Most of the time, when she kissed us we say, "Shame, shame, double shame, now I know your boy friend's name. She kissed the kids sometimes because she likes them.
> (Marlene, stimulated recall, Program B)

These responses from the children from Program B indicated that they felt secure about their kindergarten environment, that they would have support whenever problems arose. They felt the were well loved and well liked and also had confidence in treating their teacher as their friend and with whom they could share enjoyment on a friendship basis. The roles that the children perceived from Teacher B seemed to include the emotional support that the children need such as love and feeling secure rather than physical needs as reported by children from Program A.

The children in Program B perceived their teacher as one who provided not only emotional support but also learning . In Program A, although the children mentioned their teacher teaching them, their responses did not indicate interactions between themselves and the teacher. In the children 's own words, "Think about making stuff" (Jack, interview, Program A); "Buying toys" (Jack, interview, Program A); "Sing song and give them food." (James, interview, Program A); "Making butterfly" (Isabel, interview, Program A); "Make snack. Plant vegetables" (Ali, interview, Program A). These responses indicated passive involvement from the children. Children from Program A tended to respond as if they saw the teacher as doing her own chores with little involvement from or with them. They seemed to perceive the teacher's role as one of a person who did things for them not with them.

The children from Program B also mentioned about the teacher did things for them such as, "Be nice to kids, be good to kids, read stories, make things like puppets" (Linda, interview, Program B); "Work after school. They painted up things new ... " (Holly, interview, Program B); "Teach a lot. They write words for us to read and that" (Joan, interview, Program B); "Be nice. Make centers, making activities for you" (Roland, interview, Program B). However, it seems that their descriptions included both parties, not the teacher alone. What they described indicated their involvement, either in actions or feelings, that linked them to what the teacher did for or with them. They included some affective conception terms such "help" (Candy, Tony, Ann, Carl, Eric, Darcy, Dane), and "fun" with learning experiences (Mike, Nancy, Karl, Mary, Rob, Darcy, Rachelle, Mary). In the children's own words they responded, "Be nice. Make center. Make activities for you." (Roland, interview, Program B); "Let kids play a lot and be friends with kids" (Karl, interview, Program B);

"Help us when we have trouble" (Carl, interview, Program B). These responses reflected how the children perceived their teacher as a facilitator of learning who did things with them. This does not mean that the children were not aware of what the teacher did for them. In the stimulated recall, a child responded to the photograph of the teacher putting a head mask on a child as follow:

> I like when she made the costume for us and she bought us nice things for the classroom and she buys nice things to make the classroom pretty and things from the ceiling that make the ceiling looks pretty (Eric, stimulated recall).

Although the children admired what the teacher did for them when they were asked straightforwardly in the interview, their responses toward what they felt about Teacher B were basically related to what she had done with them such as, "The teacher helps us to learn how to cook" (Ann, interview, Program B); " She teaches us. We can go singing" (Nancy, interview, Program B); " She doesn't yell at us. She is nice. She helps us do things" (Mike, interview, Program B); "Teacher be good to kids. Help us do things" (Tony, interview, Program B).

Although teacher A spent a great deal of time and effort helping the children with their craft projects and some other things, when the children recalled their interactions with their teacher, they gave the impression that they came to school to help the teacher, mentioning nothing about being helped to learn by the teacher. It seemed that children in Program B saw themselves as learners or doers and the role of the teacher as that of one who helped them learn or do what they wanted to do. On the other hand, some children from Program A seemed to perceive the teacher's role as a doer and theirs that of one who fulfilled the teacher's needs. The response to the interview question, "Why do kids have to go to school? given as "Because the teacher wanted to teach them" (Liz, interview, Program A), seems to illustrate how the teacher's interaction with the children affects their viewpoint about their schooling.

The roles Teacher B presented to her children seemed to have a strong influence on the children's perception of schooling. They reported that the most important element in a kindergarten program was the teacher; the best thing in their kindergarten was their teacher; and the teacher and the aide in Program B were the source of happiness in their kindergarten (Linda, Roland, Jane, Lynn, Ann, Tony, Darcy). This type of response did not come from the children in Program A. This does not mean that Teacher A had no influence on the children's feelings. When asked what they liked best about Teacher A, the answers from some children gave some insight about what they wanted from their teacher such as, "She is nice. Sometimes she cleaned up with us" (Liz, interview, Program A); "I like to sit beside Miss A."(Liz, Stimulated recall, Programm A); "I like her holding kids' hand" (Liz, stimulated recall, Program A). However, while three children in Program A verbally responded in their stimulated recall that they liked the aide: "I like her" (Liz, stimulated recall, Program A); "I like making basket. I like Mrs. C" (Sara, stimulated recall, Program A); "I like Mrs. C. I like sewing" (Isabel, stimulated recall, Program A), none of the children expressed any affection-related words such as "like" or "love" about the teacher herself. The way they expressed what they liked about the teacher was strictly what the teacher did, such as "I like her when ... she hold kids' hands (Liz); when she spins (Michelle); when she sometimes played with me (Michelle). The different roles the teacher and the aide in Program A had were that the aide gave help whenever the children requested it while the teacher spent more time interacting with the children when she was getting the children to do what she wanted or suggested. Teacher A often sat silently with the children at painting time and did her own painting as she requested them to do. However, because this incident was not recalled by any children as a remarkable one, it is likely that the interactions between the teacher and the children while doing activities together were more meaningful to the children rather than her simple presence. Moreover, it seemed that the interactions that were supportive and mutual had a remarkable influence on the children's feelings toward their teacher. An excerpt from the children may illustrate this point.

> My school has lots of fun. There are lots of toys to play. Mrs. B and Susan are very good teachers.
> (Mary, Conversation with researcher when sorting out photographs in the stimulated recall, Program B, June 11, 1985).

It is obvious that when the teacher played the role of one who facilitated the children with not only learning experiences but also emotional support, the children were nurtured with positive emotional experiences which seemed to engender positive perceptions of schooling in the children in this study.

The Roles of the Teachers and Mediated Learning

Children from both programs did have expectations of their schooling. Most of them reported in the interviews that they came to school to "learn." School was perceived, even by these children, as a place which provided a cultural transmission process. Children from Program A reported that they came to school to read and write, although these activities were not included in the program. The children from Program B reported that they came to school to get homework, although there was none. The popular cultural notion of schooling was evidently perceived and expected by the children.

LeCompte (1978) pointed out the aspects of schooling as follows:

> Going to school is part of a socialization process; school transmits skills, aspirations, norms, and behavior patterns which assist in the assumption of specific roles. They do so both overtly and covertly. Overtly, they transmit cognitive skills such as reading, writing and mathmatics. Less obviously, the schools pursue noncognitive objectives ... norms, values, and behavior patterns deemed important for socialization to adulthood (p. 22).

If schooling has these roles, the children need not only a facilitator but also someone who helps mediate the cultural environment to them. Juliebo (1985) points out the importance of mediated learning as the core of the cultural transmission process. Based on Feuerstein's theory, she states, "It is through mediation that the child acquires behavior patterns and learning sets, which in time enhance his/her opportunities to obtain maximum benefit from direct interactions with the environment" (Juliebo, 1985, p. 54). She presents five characteristics of mediated learning experiences described by Feuerstein as (a) Intentionality of the mediator such as demonstrating and asking children to follow the action; (b) The transcendent nature of mediated learning such as giving access to the children to understand the rationale behind the actions; (c) Mediation of meaning by the mediator such as selecting meaningful experiences for the children so that they learn to look for meaning; (d) Mediation of a feeling of competence such as providing opportunities for the children to develop a sense of accomplishment; (e) Mediated regulation and control of behavior such as selecting appropriate activities that are suitable for the age group and; (f) Mediation of sharing behavior such as sharing feelings, impressions, ideas and interests.

Based on these criteria, Teacher B seemed to demonstrate all the characteristics of a mediator in her role.

(a) She used demonstration as a means to get the children's attention when introducing new learning centers or new activities such as painting.

(b) She always elaborated the consequences of the actions, both during story time using the events in the story as vicarious experiences for the children, and when any circumstance arose in the classroom that needed intervention.

(c) She utilized unit teaching which emphasized the integration of life experiences that were meaningful to the children. For example while Charlotte's Web,a story about farm animals was being read to the children, she arranged for them to visit a farm, hatch fertilized eggs brought from the farm, raise the chickens that had been hatched, and write a thank-you note to the owner of the farm that they had visted.

(d) She operated the learning center approach in a such a way that the children were provided with challenge, but also had control of their own planning so they were not required to go beyond the limit of their ability and emotions.

(e) She provided a great variety of activities at the learning centers for the children to choose from, each one carefully tailored to relate to what was meaningful to the children's interest. She often utilized the children's suggestions as to what they wanted to do and set up new activities for them.

(f) She often referred to the events she witnessed or experienced by herself when she was young as references to what was being discussed, especially during story time or group activities. She also let the children share feelings and ideas about the activities she arranged for them. Thus, Teacher B and the children became partners in learning and both derived emotional support from the partnership.

Based on the belief, "It is not the intellect but fantasy which fills his life at this age" (Steiner, 1975, p.24), the teaching styles, and the personality Teacher A possessed seemed to lack the characteristics of mediated, especially the mediation of sharing behavior such as sharing feelings, ideas, and interests. The children seemed not able to perceive it either. The way the children perceived their teacher's role had a great deal of influence on the way they interacted with her. Wood, McMahon and Crantoun (1980) reported that

> Because Janet's overt activities with children missed out on all the givens, the self restraint and what was going on inside her head as she watched the children, it is not surprising that our recordings provided a poor guide to her philosophy. However, the paradox has more important practical implication. When we looked at the reasons why children spontaneously approached Janet, it was nearly always for managerial help - access to turns, equipment, fair play or sympathy. When they came to Rececca, however, it was usually for interaction - asking her to play, help them make something and so forth (p. 25).

Although the study mentioned above was conducted in England and some time ago, the finding seemed to be similar to what was happening in Program A and Program B. The children's school experiences became more meaningful to them when the teacher mediated by sharing, demonstrating, and helping them see new relationships between new learning and their own experiences. In this sense, the teacher also provided emotional support to the children. When the children were expected to mediate between themselves and the prepared environment, as practiced in Program A, there seemed to be a lack of active interactions between the teacher and the children, and the children did not seem to receive the emotional support they needed for a healthy perception of schooling. Judging by the short-term effects observed during this study, these children did not show as much positive perspective of schooling as those in the other program.

Perceiving Program Components

It is interesting that the children from both programs perceived the structure of a kindergarten in almost the same way. In response to the question, "What should we do to make a good kindergarten?" each child mentioned the component he or she thought be essential for a kindergarten program. It is remarkable that the component most children from both programs agreed to be essential to a good kindergarten program was self directed activities.

Other components the children perceived as important included: the teacher; physical environment including the building, landscapes and decoration; the educational materials; the activities for the children; and the expected behaviors of the children and the teacher.

In spite of the view they shared about self-directed activity, the children from each program tended to put emphasis on different components. Although the children from Program A perceived the educational environment as an important element in their program such as books (Nick, James), Toys (James, Jack) and outdoor play equipment (James), they also mentioned the physical environment such as buildings and landscape (Jack, James) and food (James, Kate) as what a good kindergarten should have. The children from Program B mentioned nothing about building and landscape but chose educational components such as the teacher, the library, classroom decoration, and teacher directed activities as what were important for a kindergarten program.

It is obvious that the children tended to reflect on what they thought was meaningful to them as what was essential to the program. When the researcher compared the amount of time both teachers spent in intensive interaction with the children, it seemed that the greater amount of quality interaction time that Teacher B provided in her teaching might be one of the reasons why the children mentioned her as one of the most important components in their kindergarten program. By the same token, as children in Program A did not use the library during the entire observation period while the children in Program B spent at least half an hour a week doing special projects and listening to the librarian reading story, it was not surprising that none of the children in Program A chose the library as an important component in kindergarten. Also, many of the children in program A mentioned either food or the teacher's important role as giving them food, as an important element in a kindergarten program (James, Kate, Ali, Sara,James), while none in Program B did. Considering the amount of time and effort Teacher A put into her snack preparation and the way she used snack time as a period of sharing conversations among the whole class and herself, it was clear that the children could perceive the emphasis the teacher put into this activity or any activities or components and learn to accept as their own perception what was expected or emphasized by adults. When the children were asked about what they thought they had learned in their kindergaren, Ali said that she learned how "to write" (Ali, interview, Program A). Marlene said she learned "how to do homework," and when the researcher asked whether she had any homework she said, "Yes, they do in grade one" (Marlene, interview, Program B). Since the activities they mentioned did not exist in their programs, it was apparent that these children used criteria generalized from society as what they were supposed to learn. Children in Program B who were nurtured in an environment that emphasized educational enrichment tended to percieve educational opportunities as rewarding and meaningful. Children in Program A who were nurtured in an environment that emphasized physical and emotional enrichment tended to perceive the physical components such as food, building, playground equipment and landscape as important components.

On the surface, it appeared that the children had different preferences for their classroom settings. The majority of children in Program A responded either that they felt happy when they saw playthings in the classroom or that the best things in their kindergarten were those things such as blocks, dolls, sand, and water (Liz, Nick, Sara, James, George, Robert, Isabel, Jack, Ali). In Program B, the children tended to name more than one thing they were happy with, and none of them represented the majority preferences. Their responses included (a) activity centers in the classroom (Rob, Lynn, Roland, Ann, Karl, Eric, Marlene, Nancy, Mike, Garnet, Linda, Rachelle, Nina, Tony, Candy, Dane); (b) the teacher (Lynn, Jane, Darcy); (c) decoration such as pictures, mobiles, and bulletin board (Jane, Eric, Marlene, Nancy, Linda, Mike, Nina).

From the child's viewpoint in this study, classroom settings that created happiness contained (a) the things that the children could use and bring them enjoyment in their own self directed activities ; (b) the products of their activities such as their art work; and (c) the ones relating to activities or events they had been impressed with such as pictures about the story told in class. Interestingly, no children from Program A mentioned decoration in their classroom and their teacher as components they considered important or those that gave them happiness, while many children in Program B did. This phenomenon seems to indicate that children do not necessarily perceive in the same way as adults do. While adults may perceive the most important components in the classroom as learning activities, the teacher, and the educational settings such as room decoration and so forth, no matter how different their schooling experiences are, the children may not have this perception if their school experiences differ. The unique commonality they shared about their perception of school experiences in this study seems to be their enjoyment of self-directed activities, mentioned as "the best things" in the kindergarten program.

In conclusion, how each component became meaningful to the children seemed to depend very much on the quality of the interaction they had with it. The fact that the children in Program B did not mention snack or food as children from Program A did, while children in Program A did not mention the teacher, seemed to stem from the fact that things were less meaningful to the children when they had lesser feelings for those things. It seemed that it is not the physical existence that counts, but the emotional ties created between the child and that component that made things different. The quality of the snack in both programs seemed to be the same, but the way snack time in Program A appeared to the children as an intimate caring time between them and the teacher made their feelings for snack stronger. By the same token, the learning activities the children in Program B had, and the undivided attention the teacher gave them whenever they needed help, seemed to give them a great sense of accomplishment and caring, so that learning experiences became more meaningful to them than food which merely served to fulfill their physical needs. Thus, to nurture the children's feelings toward each program component seems to be more important in early childhood education than the quality and quantity of the component itself. Therefore, a program philosophy, a curriculum, a classroom setting, a qualified teacher, or an abundance of toys and materials alone will have little impact on the children unless positive feelings are developed.

Perceiving Children's Roles

When the children were asked about what should we do to make a good kindergarten, besides mentioning the roles of the teacher and the educational and physical environments, they mentioned their roles as a component in a good kindergarten. However, their answers indicated that they perceived their own roles in kindergarten differently. Children from Program A thought that (a) they should be good (Liz, George, Robert); (b) do things for the teacher or help her (Liz, Isabel); (c) go to school until the end of the year (Wallis); (d) clean up (Kate); and (e) should listen (George). The children in Program B thought that (a) they should be good (Tony); (b) be nice and love people (Rob, Mary); (c) listen to the teacher (Tony); (d) clean up (Eric, Linda); (e) help the teacher (Eric); (f) do not fight or push (Marlene, Nina); (g) be friendly with friends (Nancy); (h) be quiet (Nina, Holly, Candy); and (i) be attentive such as do not read books when the teacher was reading (Nina). It seems that most children were aware of their roles as those of people who must have relationships with the others in the process of schooling. The difference was that the children from Program A perceived their role as only having compliance with the teacher and mentioned nothing about their relationships with others, while the children from Program B included their friends and other people. Examples are Rob's saying, "Be nice. Love people and be nice to people" (interview, Program B) ; Mary's saying, " ... Lots of love to everyone else" (interview, Program B); and Nancy's saying, "We can be friends. We can play with each other" (interview, Program B). In other words, they were aware of the functions of school as helping them to have healthy relationships with other human beings.

When the children were asked about the roles of any children in schooling, their responses were varied. The children from Program A thought that they had to go to school (a) because the teacher wanted to teach them (Liz); (b) their mothers wants them to (Iris); to learn things from the teacher (Wallis); to learn (Jack, Ali, Kate, George, Nick, James); and to help (Robert). The children from Program B gave these reasons: (a) because they like kindergarten (Rob); (b) to learn (Lynn Roland, Carl, Ann, Jane, Marlene, Linda, Mike, Holly, Dane); (c) to have fun (Mary, Nancy, Dane); to get some notes (Karl); (d) to learn how to read (Karl, Garnet, Rachelle); (e) in order to go to grade one or to learn about it (Dane, Tony, Candy); (f) to learn about stories (Candy).

It seemed that the children from Program B saw themselves not only as followers of the teacher's or adults' expectations such as being good, quiet, obedient, and helpful as children in Program A did, but also as doers and learners able to develop many skills. Many of their responses indicated that they felt that they were achieving something and that their school experiences were intrinsically rewarding such as, "I think it's fun to learn how to count" (Karl, stimulated recall, Program B); "I like the things we do in the classroom (Ann, interview, Program B); "I like what the carrots are doing. I did good testing today" (Tony, stimulated recall, Program B).

In fact, children in Program A also learned many skills such as finger knitting, making cards, and learned much about nature. When they were asked about what children learned in their kindergarten, or what they had learned from their kindergarten, most of them mentioned that they came to school to learn things, how to make things, songs, activities at circle time, and to read and to write. However, when an indirect question was used to stimulate them to respond freely to what roles they had in their kindergarten, none of them mentioned their sense of achievement. The impression they seemed to give was that their role was one of submission to adults' demands and expectations.

The teacher's attitudes and interactions with the children seemed to play an important part in influencing the children's perception of their roles in schooling. A dialogue between Teacher A and the researcher may illustrate how her belief affected the children's behavior and perception of their roles in schooling:

Researcher: You always told the children to shake hands with adults, I think every day, if there were some other adults in the classroom. I wonder what is the reason why you have to tell them every day because this is the whole year already. By the last month, you still have to tell them. Is that your intention?

Teacher A: I tell them because if I don't they often forget. When they first come to school they often need some direction, some guidance, and if they forget I have to remind them to do it.

Researcher: So you believe that we should remind the children because they may forget, not because you have other reasons.

Teacher A: Well, I know that if I don't tell them, then they often don't do it. So I like to remind them that there are other adults too.

Researcher: So the children don't know the reason behind what they have to do?

Teacher A: They probably intuitively know that it's a way of establishing contact with the other people in the room, starting a day of. The children at this age do not do things through reasons. They do things through imitation and unfortunately they don't see that part. I say hello to you before the children come and that so I have to give them some verbal direction but usually the children will learn by imitation at this age and not through verbal direction and I find that unless they get examples from somebody they won't do it.

Researcher: So you believe that the only way the children could learn is imitation?

Teacher A: The best way is through imitation.

Researcher: You don't believe that they could reason?
Teacher: Oh! I certainly do. I know that they can reason but that's not the way of learning at this age.
(Teacher Interview, June, 22, 1985)

Teacher A's belief seemed to greatly influence her practice. While she expected the children to learn through imitation, she missed the point that when she seldom gave them reasons or requested them to do some thinking, the children imitated this behavior as well. When the children had to be told over and over to do the same thing from day one to the last day of the school year, they seemed to have less self esteem of themselves as responsible, learning persons whose autonomy is given credit. On the other hand, Teacher B gave credit to the children's ability to be responsible for their own learning. She stated her viewpoint in an interview with the researcher.

> I want them to know about learning. I want them to have a very positive attitude about school. I want them to like school. It is the most important thing, and that they have themselves some self responsibility for themselves and for what they do and for their classmates and that they are responsible for them as well.
> (Teacher Interview, June 4, 1985)

As a result of her practice, the children in her program seemed possess what was expected by their teacher. They also perceived themselves as possessing these qualities as well. Robinson (1980) explains this type of phenomena as follow:

> It may well be accurate to make such a generalization about any aspect of child behavior, that is, if the parents expect value, reward and model that behavior, their children are likely to manifest that behavior (p. 126).

His explanation seems to apply to teachers as well as parents as evidenced from the present study. What the children perceived and valued about themselves and their school experiences tended to relate to what the teacher expected, valued, rewarded, and modeled as well.

Summary

A summary of the findings is presented in the form of tentative answers to the questions posed in this study. Because the teachers in this study had unique personalities and ways of interacting with the children, these answers should not be generalized to any teaching in the same types of programs described in this study unless the teachers' personalities, personal beliefs, and styles of teaching and interacting with the children are similar to those of teachers in this study.

Question #1: What impact do different styles of teaching have on the experiences and behaviors of the children?

The teachers in this study had different styles of teaching which seemed to result in differing responses from the children.

In Program A work and play were separated. Work came mostly in the form of art projects. Each child was responsible for his or her own work, and the teacher was responsible for making sure that the work was not left undone regardless of the individual children's abilities and interests. The teacher encouraged the children to comply with her expectations by correcting them when inappropriate behavior occurred and reminding them to be obedient. Fairy tales and some nature stories were the only types of literature used in this Program, and the children were supposed to absorb values, language, and love of books without any mediation from the teacher, by listening to the same stories several times.

In Program B, work and play were not separated. The children could switch from work to play or from play to work any time during the center session. The children were responsible for their own learning within the guidelines received from the teacher. For example, the children had to visit at least three centers each day, and some of them might be assigned by the teacher, but the amount of time the children would spend in each center was not prescribed. Besides art work activities, some work came in the form of academically oriented ones such as math games, science experimentation, or oral writing and tracing. Work was used to create situations wherein the children had opportunities to socialize by helping each other to get the work done. The teacher encouraged the children to have internalized compliance by acknowledging appropriate behaviors and reinforcing good behavior by giving positive comments. Undesirable behaviors were controlled by creating situations that would prevent the occurrence of those behaviors. A variety of literature including fairy tales and modern children's books, had been used in this program but chapter books had been dominant. The teacher acted as a mediator, helping the children to perceive values, morals, and food for thought about life.

As a result of these practices, the children in Program A tended to have comply with the teacher's expectation but did not regard their teacher as an important component in their kindergarten. Many of them did not show autonomy and needed to be pushed by the teacher to do what they were supposed to do. Some of them expressed negative comments about the teacher and their program. None of them mentioned stories in the interviews as their favorite activity; neither did they identify with any characters in the stories read in class.

The children from Program B tended to demonstrate autonomy and self-esteem. They mentioned how good they felt about their program, their teacher, and their abilities to learn and regarded their teacher as an important component in their kindergarten. They had positive attitudes towards "work" and literature and tended to imitate the narrative styles of the literature presented to them. They often identified themselves, their friends, or persons they knew to the characters in the stories read in class.

Question #2 : What are the children's perspectives of schooling in different kindergarten programs?

a. How do children's perspectives differ?

b. How do they perceive the teacher's roles?

c. How do the teacher's behaviors and expectations affect the children's perspectives of schooling?

In this study, children from the two kindergarten programs experienced and perceived considerably different roles of the same elements in schooling. The responses from the children in Program B indicated more positive perceptions about their teacher, learning and schooling.

Perceptions of schooling seemed positive in relation to the emotional experiences the children received in school and also seemed to occur when the children received emotional support from their teacher whose roles emphasized being a facilitator and mediator of learning. Controls in classroom were effective when there was a good balance of children's autonomy in learning and children's positive attitudes toward the controls. Modeling of human qualities from the teacher seemed to be effective, as children tended to imitate their teacher's personality in ways of using language, showing affection, making sense of the environment, and perceiving values. The children seemed to be able to perceive their teacher's expectations and interact with the teacher in a way that complied with her expectations. For example, the children from Program A had to be reminded to shake hands with adults in the classroom every day and did not bring up any issues involving serious discussions in class . By contrast, children in Program B were seldom reminded to check their assignment in the centers every day and often brought up sophisticated or serious issues to discuss in class such as death, sickness, kidnapping, and so forth. The children's perspectives tended to differ when they had a different educational environment. For example, children from Program A most valued play and food and the physical environment, while children in Program B most valued using their fullest potential in working at center time and the educational environment. They saw the roles of their teacher as a learning facilitator and mediator while the children in Program A saw their teacher's role as that of a provider. As a result, the children from Program A seldom reached their teacher for interaction that involved mediated learning, while children from Program B did so very often. It seems that the children's expectations about their teacher's behaviors influenced their ways of interacting with her and created behavioral patterns that tended to comply with those expectations.

Question #3: How do teacher's attitudes, characteristics, and interpretation contribute to the children having positive and/or negative perspectives of schooling?

It seems that a positive approach in teaching or discipline tended to receive positive responses from the children. When the teacher exhibited a positive attitude that the children could be responsible for their own learning by giving them choices, they derived pleasure from their own learning experience and perceived schooling as something they wanted for themselves rather than something adults wanted for them. When the teacher was affectionate, empathetic, and hardworking, the children tended to imitate these qualities and reacted to their environment in the same way as modeled by the teacher. Her interpretation of the principles of teaching might lead to a practice that even contradicted what the other teachers did using the same principles. For example, Teacher A's interpretation of Steiner's principles that cautioned about children becoming intellectually burned out led her to eliminate all academically oriented activities such as science experiments which can actually create "a sense of wonder" which Steiner mentioned as important for learning. As a result, the children in her program tended seldom to make any effort or show interest in making sense of any phenomena that required rationalizing, while the children in Program B did so frequently. Although their rationalizations were often not logical, they cultivated the habit of thinking and often included "because" in their verbal responses to their environment. Although one must not force rationality, this does not imply that rationality should be ignored or discouraged.

In conclusion, the children's positive or negative perspectives of schooling in this study depended a great deal on the quality of interactions they experienced with their teacher and the educational setting they had. The teachers' expectations, interpretations, and characteristics were as much an integral part of influencing the quality of their interactions with the children as they were in influencing the children's expectations for their own behaviors and perceptions of schooling.

CHAPTER VI

RESEARCHER'S REFLECTION

How My Study Reinforces My Belief System

The Beliefs that Changed

This study has changed some of my beliefs about education for young children. One that changed dramatically was the belief in cognitively oriented curriculum using Piagetian tasks and Montessori's principles as the core of program development. This study helped to open my eyes to see how dry and meaningless cognition could be if built with little connection to children's experiences and feelings. I started to question the values of curriculum based on the pragmatists' principles that children should learn only what will be useful for their everyday life. There was too much of what we want for the children but less concern of what the children want for themselves. Moreover, what we thought the children wanted for themselves come mostly from adult perspectives. Even before the study was over, I was surprised by how much I had changed, and new beliefs arose dramatically. The irony was that when Teacher B seemed to use a great number of Steiner's principles in her teaching but let the children pursue their own interests and expectations in intellectual activities, while Teacher A rigidly put Steiner's principles before the individual child's different needs. This resulted in my changing my original intention of proposing to introduce pure Waldorf education in my country.

The philosophy applied in Waldorf education has touched me, and it has widened my perspectives to see the importance of humanity in education - that one learns to be human only through humanity. I also began to perceive the importance of an educational approach that strives more for the comprehensive development of the young child; the integration of imagination, will power, social behavior, and other learning capacities by means of playful self-actualization and imitative learning. My belief gradually changed throughout my study from approving a cognitively oriented program to longing to develop a kindergarten program that emphasizes personal development rather than particular skills. However, it seems that public schools cannot avoid pressure from parents, politics, and demographic changes in society. Any approach from one culture could not be used or fit well into another culture without some modification.

The Beliefs that were Reinforced

I believe in the present and have always thought that there is so much suffering in education that every party involved in the process - the children, the teachers, the parents and the community - have to pay for the price because of "the fear of the unknown" for the future. To conquer our fear, we trade our present for our unknown future: heavy discipline, the pain of being tolerated, being submissive to whatever is said to be good by "the experts" eventhough they contradict our "gut feelings." This relies on the belief that prevention is better than correction. As a result, education is used as a witchdoctor's medicine to give us immunity to any "evils" that may ruin our lives. In my country, Thailand, most kindergarteners in private schools have to practice printing and numeration as their homework, which for some children, may take hours to finish every day. This is so they will be well equipped with the skills they need for their future education. In many Canadian kindergartens that I visited, children have to finish their work to be eligible to choose play activities. During the pilot project which I carried out in a traditional kindergarten, some children had only a few minutes to play each day during free play time because they had to spend a long time finishing their work sheets. I could imagine how much pain there was in those tender hearts when weary little heads and hands were forced to finish those meaningless paper activities while their peers were happily enjoying the most important thing in childhood life - freedom to play. In my study, Program A's philosophy clearly stated that there would be no stress and strain in this program, yet when I was assigned to "help" the children who were behind schedule in their craft work, I sensed the same stress and pain I had felt earlier as I attempted push the robot-like children to sew a picture designed by the teacher. I saw their eyes wander sadly like a hungry puppy to the friends who were screaming excitedly at their adventurous play in the park. The teacher's intention was to protect the children from developing bad habits of not getting things done, which might ruin their lives in the future. These children were forced to live for the future, to experience a meaningless present for some obscure future.

However, some children have a strong sense of future; for example, when given a meal, they eat the things they like least first and keep the things they like best for last so that they feel satisfied when the meal is ended. Many children in Program B were like this and went to the centers they liked least first so that they could spend the whole time left with the things they liked best. The main difference between these children and those in Program A was that these children's present was not bitter, and their future was under their own control, while the children in Program A were required to endure a frustrating present in anticipation of some unsure future based on good working habits, good-eye hand coordination and other skills considered good for them. As adults, would we appreciate having somebody else plan our own future for us? How would we enjoy an arranged marriage or a chosen career merely because well-intentioned people with good wills hope it to be best for us?

One of my professors once claimed that he did not believe that "learning should be fun." To be able to master skills or complicated concepts, one had to struggle, even sometimes painfully, as time and energy and commitment had to be spent to achieve them. My professor forgot that if the learners really wanted to learn, this type of temporary pain was endurable because they chose to have pain for their present to get what they want, the same as when people go for tattoos or plastic surgery or the child eats unwanted food first. Many people tend to overlook the fact that any affects such as "fun," "interest," or "boredom" are personal feelings, and what the teacher thinks would be fun for most children might turn out to be boring for some. When dealing with learning, "fun" should be replaced by "pleasure" from "contentment" which is the opposite state of mind to "frustration." Steiner also discussed pleasure in learning and mentioned that he disagreed with "nothing but pleasure" in the process of educating children. He stated:

> The simple fact is that certain things give the children no pleasure, but they must be done anyway. By handing the children nothing but pleasure, the sense of duty, for example, could not be developed; for this can only be achieved through overcoming obstacles.

(Steiner, 1982a, p. 58)

However, Steiner means that more has to be done on the teacher's part about the matter of giving children unpleasurable experiences. He emphasizes the importance of the relationship between the teacher and the students; the importance of winning the children's love and loyal affection so that, under the teacher's guidance, they even do the things they dislike or that even make them suffer a little bit. (Steiner, 1982a) This implies that there must be a degree of contentment and willingness from the children. The children would take pleasure in their loyalty to do what they thought would make their beloved one happy, and because of this feeling, that experience would become meaningful to them at the present moment, in the sense that they had their own reasons for doing so.

My belief in giving priority to the present or immediate environment over the future or later situation has been reinforced by many researchers. Lewin (1931) asserts that although the effects cease when the child goes out of the field or the setting, the influence of that environment remains because there have been changes in the individual as he or she interacted with the setting. He contends that the environment changes the basis of reaction to all later situations. From this point of view, one may interpret that early experience should have long-term significance upon later behavior (Clarke,1968). However, the point I want to make is rather on the potency of the environment in which the child is currently functioning (Kagan & Klein, 1973).

From my viewpoint, reinforced by my study, the potency of the environment on children's behavior depends very much on what the children feel about their interactions with the environment. In other words, only warm, supportive school settings create strong effects on children's ability to learn and appreciate school experience. If learning is perceived as the growing process of becoming a better human being, the teacher is the most important part of the school environment. Bates (1975) found that children imitate nurturant adults more than they do nonnurturant adults. This becomes a reciprocal process, for when the child imitates, the adult becomes more nuturant than when the child does not imitate. Zigler and Yando (1972) also stated that the child's attitude toward the model was found to be significant. As such the teacher has to be sensitive to the way she or he arranges the immediate learning environment for the child. If the child's attitude is considered important, the immediate learning environment should be pleasurable as suggested by Rohwer (1971):

> The guiding principle of early education (preschool and elementary) should be to provide the child with repeated experiences of gratification resulting from intellectual activity. Lest this recommendation be grossly misread, it must be emphasized that it refers to satisfying work and

> play, not to training in techniques of self-indulgence and mediocrity (p. 338).

It is difficult to convince teachers who have strong beliefs that if the children do not behave properly or have good habits at present, they will have difficulty in the future, and if the children are not well prepared for later school learning, they will be less likely to gain accomplishments in the future. Some adults even believe that if children never have a chance to experience a hard time, they will not be able to tolerate tough times in the future. These beliefs put too much emphasis on the end-product. The enjoyment and satisfaction gained through interactions between the teacher and the children are not based on what the children really are, but rather on what they might become. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee of what children will become and no prediction can be totally accurate. From the Berkeley longitudinal studies, MacFarlane (1963, 1964) reported that only one-third of the adult status predictions derived from early childhood indicators proved accurate. About 20% appeared to do less well than predicted and 50% better. Many studies reviewed in the related literature part of my study also confirmed that the long-lasting relationship of the effects of preschool education and later school achievement is not evidenced when the children pass their elementary grades. These findings are significant to support my belief that, in early childhood education, we should put more emphasis on the present and enjoy the children the way they are rather than the way we want them to be. By having this attitude, we could facilitate an enjoyable immediate learning environment for the children.

A remarkable example could be drawn from the approach Teacher B was using in her program. On the surface, it seems to be questionable to let the children make their own judgment as to how long or how much time and energy they should spend on the task. Some children appeared to spend only a few minutes on a task they did not like and spent a lot of time in play based centers rather than in academically oriented centers. Some children even let their friends who offered to help do the task for them, or they did it together to save time. If the emphasis was put on adults' view of the end-product or what the children would be in the future, there seems to be a great risk that these children would grow up as underachievers, not willing to put their best effort on what is supposed to be done. However, it appears that the environment in this program seems to be warm and supportive. Both the children who gave help and the children who needed help benefited from their interactions. The helper gained the feeling of self-worth while the other had a chance to observe good modeling from his or her friends. Miller and Dollard (1941) reported the results of their experiments both with rats and children showing that the rats could learn by imitating the preceding rat, and the children by imitating the model's choice. Other researchers such as Skinner (1957), Sears (1957), Gewirtz and Stingle (1968) also considered imitation to be a discrimination learning phenomenon. For example, the children who were less equipped with skills to do the task also learned something important from their helpful friends. They not only learned by observing or imitating their friends, but experienced the attitudes of helping each other and volunteering to do extra work with pleasure. I was not surprised when the results from the analysis in my study showed that the children in Program B had very good perceptions about schooling. They perceived the teacher as an important part of their schooling, saw themselves as achievers, and viewed school as a place to learn and to have fun. This positive perspective about schooling, I believe, reflects their pleasure about their interactions with their immediate learning environment. I came to the conclusion that when young children are allowed to be what they are, their emotional needs are well satisfied in the learning process. This includes acceptance of short attention spans if the work doesn't match their interest and ability, and the fact that children have their own ways of thinking which may not always make sense to adults; that their fantasy world, such as imaginative play or pretending, is more meaningful to them than the dry, fact-oriented reality considered important by adults, and that they are not future-oriented like most adults.

In answering the question about what the children would become in the future, I would like to present my life span position based on my belief in Karma. According to my belief, life is an infinite, ongoing process of self-created destiny (Karma). Every action in our lives leads to reaction and another action. Destiny comes from the actions accumulated as a chain of life. Every moment and every move of actions is the process of changing. The body changes because of the process of aging; the spirit and the soul change because of the process of interacting with new environments, and one's destiny changes because the changed spirit (Unger, n.d.). Soul and body build new dimensions of their own. Therefore, nobody is expected to be successful in predicting or controlling anybody else's destiny.

I speculate that the reason children who could not read well in early grades failed to read well for the rest of their educational years is because the environment and approaches to teaching remained similar in every grade they attended. The expectations held by teachers, parents, and friends remained the same as did the school, home, and community environment. I believe the reason why preschool education for disadvantaged children has often been seen as initially successful in aspects such as IQ gains, school achievement, and social emotional development is because it provides a change of environment. The Karma the children were doing in this environment was totally different from the homes they came from. The new destiny was building, but not forever, because newness is not permanent. When they entered primary schools, the environment was no longer new and stimulating, and they could not continue the growing, their destiny could not be changed by any new Karma. This is why research often shows that the effects of preschool are not likely to last beyond the primary grade level.

When preschool education involves parents in the program, parent education is considered an essential element, as in the Ypsilanti Project (Schweinheart & Weikart, 1985), the longitudinal study shows tentative long lasting effects on children. In my study, Program B also had a strong parent involvement component. The parents received a newsletter every month telling about what was going on with the children at school. New ideas or concepts about child rearing were shared through informal conversation when the teacher visited the children's home or through the regular newsletter. The parents were given opportunities to feel they were an important part of the program and were respected for their expertise, for example when they were invited to be speakers during cultural days and to supervise ongoing learning activities. The parents had a chance to see what the teacher was doing, the way she was doing it, and the reason why she was doing or had been doing a certain type of activity. There was a chain of continuity between home and school when parents understood what was going on at school and desired to encourage it at home. They were involved in their child's active participation to create Karma. In this case, even if the next teacher was not a good one, the spirit and the soul that grew strong in this type of environment would still continue to derive nourishment from the home. Although the child may regressively change because of a new educational environment, the chain of the old Karma would still continue until the child had a chance to receive a good educational environment again. The teacher in Program B indicated that she had followed the progress of her children in the years following kindergarten. She found out that the children who were put in a class in which the teacher was passive and whose approach was contradictory to what the children had experienced in her kindergarten became passive and unhappy with school work, while those who entered a grade one class that had a teacher who also believed in freedom of choices in learning and active roles from the children, continued to be very progressive, active in their learning and enjoyed schooling. However, when the children were mixed in grade two or three, those who had lost the continuity seemed to catch up with the others and no differences were noticed among them. This phenomenon is well supported by Bronfenbrenner (1975). From his ecological view point based on comtemporary research, he concluded that without family involvement, intervention tends to be unsuccessful, and what few effects are achieved are likely to disappear when the intervention is discontinued. However, the discontinuity, if occurring for only a limited period of time, enables the chain to be rejoined, allowing for a cumulative sequence and retention of the Karma to again take hold. This was evidenced by the children going on from Program B. The discontinuity may have more adverse effects when the old Karma lacks intensity. Sameroff (1975) reviewed the research about the long term effects of early experiences and concluded that long term effects existed only when combined with, and supported by, persistent environmental circumstances. The amount, intensity and duration of subsequent experience are factors of long-term significance of early experience. If there were no cumulative sequence, long-term predictability could not be expected.

For this reason, the emphasis of early childhood education should be on the nourishment of the present Karma of the children and inspiration for the children to continue the Karma. In my opinion, the inspiration to do the Karma depends solely on the person's internalizing process. We can create situations so interesting that the children will be inspired, but there is no way to force every soul or spirit to accept external control of the environment. Physical control such as telling or forcing the children to do what they are supposed to do by punishment results in only robot-like, short-lived Karma which lasts only when the control is present. When a person has felt that the Karma is not his or hers but has been forced on him or her by somebody else, life is meaningless because his or her soul is imprisoned. Only the body is doing the Karma, not the spirit and soul. To me, the soul and spirit are life. The body is only a temporary house where the soul and the spirit can live and grow. Any approaches in child rearing or education that consider the importance of physical life, such as the quantity of actions or productivity, more than the importance of spirit and soul life, such as the peace of the child's mind and the nourishment of it, are not compatible with my belief system.

What ECE Educators Need to be Aware of as They Plan for and Work with Young Children

Some leaders in early childhood education such as Elkind (1982) and Nimnicht (1982) have great concerns about the adverse effects of early formal education on young children. Elkind (1982), in his book The Hurried Child -

Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon, has pointed out the burdens we have brought on our children and their adverse effects on children's life. His findings indicated from research and also real life phenomena of unique cases that the later formal education is introduced, the better it is for the child. From reviewing research about early reading, Elkind concludes that the advantages of being early readers disappeared by the time the children were in grade four, and adolescents who were introduced to reading later were more enthusiastic, spontaneous readers than those who were introduced to reading early. Nimnicht (1982) also has strong beliefs against formal instruction in preschool. He says:

> There is not enough loving, tender care going out to children and there is too much basic education of the A, B, C, ... 1,2,3,4 ... variety ... This regressive tendency is making already unhealthy classrooms even less healthy. As pressure continues, kindergartens, nursery schools, and day care centers are pressed to prepare children for first grade. This entire movement is harmful to children and results in poor education (p. 9).

While I agree wholeheartedly with these educators, I have some additional thoughts. From my intensive pondering over what I witnessed in the two kindergarten programs in my study, I attempted to look at what we are doing in early childhood education from different angles than those emphasized by other researchers.

Readiness

In my view, we should put more emphasis on emotional readiness than on academic readiness. In preparing the children emotionally for schooling, the children need more than to have fun with school activities that are considered to be proper for their age. They need to make sense of their environment and perceive themselves as achievers in those activities. They need to feel that their relationships with teacher and friends are warm and supportive. By simply removing the intellectual elements and challenge from the program as Program A did is not the answer. The children's answers, "Mom wants them to" or "The teacher wants to teach them," when they were asked why children went to school, indicates that the way the children perceived schooling in Program A was as something they must have, not because of their own needs, but because of their parents' or their teacher's needs. The fact that they did not include the teacher as an important part of their school experience reflects how ineffectively this program had dealt with the children's emotional readiness for schooling. It is similar to children who have big houses, good food, and freedom to enjoy themselves the way they want but still feel empty and that life is not meaningful. I could not help comparing them with the industrious children in Program B who not only did difficult tasks by themselves but also helped friends to finish their work. In this program, the children's voices were saying, " When I make things, other friends come along to help me. Also some more friends come and make things." While the children's voices from Program A indicated void emotional involvement in their perception of schooling, those from Program B revealed how supportive and meaningful school was to them. They became not only doers but also supporters of each other. Although it is impossible to predict which of these two programs will be best for the children in the long run, it is quite reasonable to conclude that the children from Program B seemed to have emotional readiness for schooling and percieve schooling as a rewarding experience. From this present study, the supportive relationships among the children and the teacher, the emphasis on a balance of autonomy and authority in school experiences, and the environment in which the children had many opportunities to experience success and minimum possibilities of failure seems to be a good example of how to cultivate the children's emotional readiness for schooling.

Intellectual Stimulation

Research in early learning leads to the fear that if children are not intellectually stimulated during their early years, they may never reach their intellectual potential. Bloom (1964) did longitudinal studies about intellectual development and reported that "In terms of intelligence measured at age 17, about 50% of the development takes place between conception and age 4, about 30% between ages 4 and 8 and about 20% between ages 8 and 17" (p. 88). Bloom made it clear that his longitudinal data showed that what was obtained at one age is not lost and is included in the measure of the characteristic at a later age. This position leads to the belief that the earlier intellectual development is stimulated, the better the child will be equipped to use his brain competently when he or she grows up. Even educators such as Nimnicht (1982) who voiced complaints against formal education strongly believes in early intellectual stimulation. He empahasizes that children should learn to be problem-solvers and suggest using questions or remarks to stimulate the children to think divergently, such as, "O.K. You got the answer that way. What is another way to get it"; "Look for three ways to try to answer the question"; " If you do this, what is the other person likely to do?" (p. 11).

Steiner (1975) points out the fatigue we experience when we use our brain for intellectual tasks, and questions why we do not feel fatigue when we breathe or circulate our blood throughout our body. In other words, why does the brain get fatigued while the heart and lungs that work rhythmatically do not. He suggests that children could easily get intellectually burned out, and that activities involving rhythmic movement may be more appropriate for children of a young age than those involving mental activities.

My opinion is that mental activities and intellectual stimulation have their own important function in early childhood education. I would support Piaget's position (Piaget, 1972) that the young child is a builder of his own intellectual structure and that nobody can force strategies to build those structures for the child. I also support Steiner's position that rhythmic movement is essential in early childhood education. However, intellectual stimulation should be an integral part of the program, and to be the most effective should be through modeling rather than enforcing. A good example is the technique of the teacher in Program B. She used literature that presented life events showing how characters acted and reacted in the environment. She helped the children make sense of what was happening in the stories and used descriptive language to give reasons behind what she was doing or what other people were doing. She always showed enthusiasm for divergent thinking without requiring the children to practice it as a learning activity. As a result, the children absorbed the qualities of intellectual behaviors the teacher presented to them as a model and started to follow her footsteps. They enthusiastically asked questions and enjoyed seeking for reasons through exploration; they used language descriptively, full of imagination and detail; they were eager to share their opinions and comments. Intellectual stimulation in this approach does not separate intellectual activities from life. It is natural and becomes part of the children's way of life - learning to be human by absorbing human qualities. When intellectual stimulation is set as a learning task, with little connection to what the child feels, the process of internalization will is not likely to occur. The teacher in Program B did not exclude intellectual facts and information as Teacher A did; neither did she make them a required task. She introduced information about animals, plants, society, and many other subjects, helping the children to make connections between the stories she used in class and their direct experiences. She helped them make connections between the facts and the things they had 'feelings' for so that the facts would be meaningful to the children. As a result, the children felt that they "learned a lot" and were eager to learn more facts and information. They learned to be intellectual through humanity rather than through behavioral engineering by the usage of the so called learning tasks or evaluation. On the other side of the continuum, in Program A concern about the children's intellectual burn-out resulted in the teacher's behavior becoming a model of passive interactionism. They learned to be passive in reasoning, and imitated their teacher's style of giving information in short and clear-cut sentences with little detail, as seen from their responses in this study (see Appendix D). They used negative responses such as refusing to cooperate with the researcher in much the same way that the teacher refused to follow their desires to do what they wanted, claiming that this was the way to cultivate their wills. The truth of Steiner's warning that any negative responses should have no place in the pedagogy of young children seems to be proven in this phenomenon.

In conclusion, intellectual stimulation should be done in a humanistic way, using the children's interest and feelings as the starting point to present them with how human beings gain their wisdom. The process should be inviting rather than forceful, with no standard expectation for mastery held for all children. The relationship and affection between the teacher and the children should play an important part in inspiring the children to imitate the adult modelling. Yando, Seitz and Zigler (1978) concluded that the amount of imitation in which the child engages is complexly determined by (a) the cognitive level of the child; (b) his or her attitude toward the adult who is providing cues which may be imitated,; and (c) the nature of the task that confronts him or her. Piaget (1962) makes a similar claim:

> Personal schemes, like all others, are both intellectual and affective. We do not love without seeking to understand and we do not even hate without a subtle use of judgement. Thus, when we speak of 'affective schematas' it must be understood that what is meant is merely the affective aspect of schemata which are also intellectual. (p. 207).

For Piaget, intelligence provides the structure of actions while feelings provide the dynamics (Pulaski, 1971). The responses from the children in this study confirmed this statement. This also confirmed my belief that any teaching approach that loses the balance of consideration for intelligence and feelings would not be in the children's best interests.

Curriculum Content

Although Piaget stated the importance of "affective schemata" in the cognitive process, the interpretation of his theory as a basis for an educational approach in early childhood education seems to have lost the balance. I used to follow the Piagetian-based curriculum, emphasizing intellectual skills such as classification, seriation, and representation along with integrating the ideas of the pragmatists to equip the children with an awareness of their community and themselves, such as awareness of their body and relationships with people in their family and community. At present, I equate these topics with formal education which should be eliminated from the curriculum for kindergarteners. As a matter of fact, I tend to believe that there should be no formal curriculum for kindergarten. If dry facts and information cannot be related to the children's world of imagination, life, and fantasy, they should be eliminated from preschool education. As children reach the concrete operational period, this focus on imaginative, make-believe, and fantasy can be gradually replaced with reasoning based on reality. Piaget made it clear that even if the child is not taught to learn skills or concepts in classification, seriation, or even conservation, when he reaches a certain age and maturity, he will be able to do or to understand these concepts. Therefore, the content of curriculum should be drawn from whatever is in the child's interest at the time. These topics would be of great interest if the children could use their imaginative and creative ability in activities dealing with these topics such as make-believe, art projects, play, or any child-directed activities. However, from this study, it seemed that the children's interests depended very much on the environment which they were in and their attitudes. For example, many children in Program A mentioned that they liked to water the plants, while none from Program B did even though they included plants as something they liked. The different attitudes toward taking care of plants seemed to come from the fact that children in Program A watered the plants in their classroom on the basis of volunteering, while children in Program B did it as a chore given by the teacher at calendar time. On the other hand, the children from Program B mentioned their enjoyment with academic activities such as testing, science, editing and so forth while children from Program A did not because these activities were not included in their program. It seems clear that by presenting rich learning experiences on the basis of children's freedom of choices, and tailoring the experiences to suit the individuals when their interests arise, the children's attitudes toward school tend to be more positive than when curriculum content is rigid and based solely on what the teacher thinks is good for the children, or even when based on only some children's interests but forced on every child in the class.

Implications for Teacher Education

A remarkable phenomenon from my study that surprised me when analyzing both the children's tasks and from the researcher's reflections was as follows. The reason the children's covert behaviors in each program were different was that those from Program B internalized and imitated their teacher's inner qualities such as the way she used language descriptively, the way she enthusiastically challenged ideas, and the empathy she had for the other people. It seems that for young children, the teacher's personality is a crucial influence on the children's process of becoming.

As mentioned earlier, the effects of modeling on young children are strongly supported by a great deal of research (Miller & Dollard, 1941; Kuhn, 1973, Karnes & Lee, 1979; Strichart, 1974; Steiner, 1975, 1982a, 1982c). However, there does not seem to be much attention given to the process of preparing teachers of young children on personality development that would positively impact the nature of young children. A study of programs to prepare early childhood personnel by Spodek and Davis (1982) revealed that important teacher qualifications were rooted in basic personal characteristics as opposed to the competencies that might have resulted from participation in teacher training programs. As my study revealed that young children are selective in imitating or internalizing anything that is meaningful to them, I would like to suggest that there should be more intensive research about the personalities of the teachers who are suitable to teach young children. The findings could be used as guidelines for teacher education instead of emphasizing solely competencies in presenting concepts or learning activities. Although some characteristics that seem to be crucial for the quality of teachers of young children such as being loving, lively, positive, empathetic and sensitive could not be easily learned or evaluated, an effort in teacher education programs should be made to encourage more emphasis on personality development.

Having seen the effective way Teacher B used literature and modeling to help inculcate certain knowledge and behaviors in young children, I feel a similar approach would be effective with students preparing to be teachers. First, the students should be exposed to a variety of literature illustrating how children feel and perceive the world, as well as showing teachers interacting with young children a humanistic approach. Second, through carefully selecting teachers exhibiting desirable qualities, and providing opportunities for students to observe and work with them, it would be hoped that students would internalize how to be a good teacher and make efforts to modify their own personalities accordingly. Third, teachers of young children should be encouraged and supported by teacher education programs to do research in their own classrooms and share their reflections on all aspects of early childhood education. This type of study would be most valuable to the students in teacher education to expand their horizons and be able to contextualize from the studies rather than generalize from the theories.

Implications for Further Research

1. This study was limited to the kindergarten year. A longitudinal research project following these children throughout their schooling would contribute greater

understanding of the long-term effects of the kindergarten year.

2. Further study involved with uncovering children's views about what experiences are meaningful to them in different types of ECE programs would be useful for ECE program development.

3. Research about teachers' personalities and the influence certain personality types have on different children would be useful for developing a strong component in early childhood teacher education.

4. Further study about how parents of young children view certain aspects of their children's schooling would contribute more understanding of what might be done to involve parents more in the education of their young children.

5. Classroom research about the effects of the teacher's beliefs and approaches on young children's overt and covert behaviors would be useful, especially for students in teacher education, as literature to broaden their vicarious experiences in teaching.

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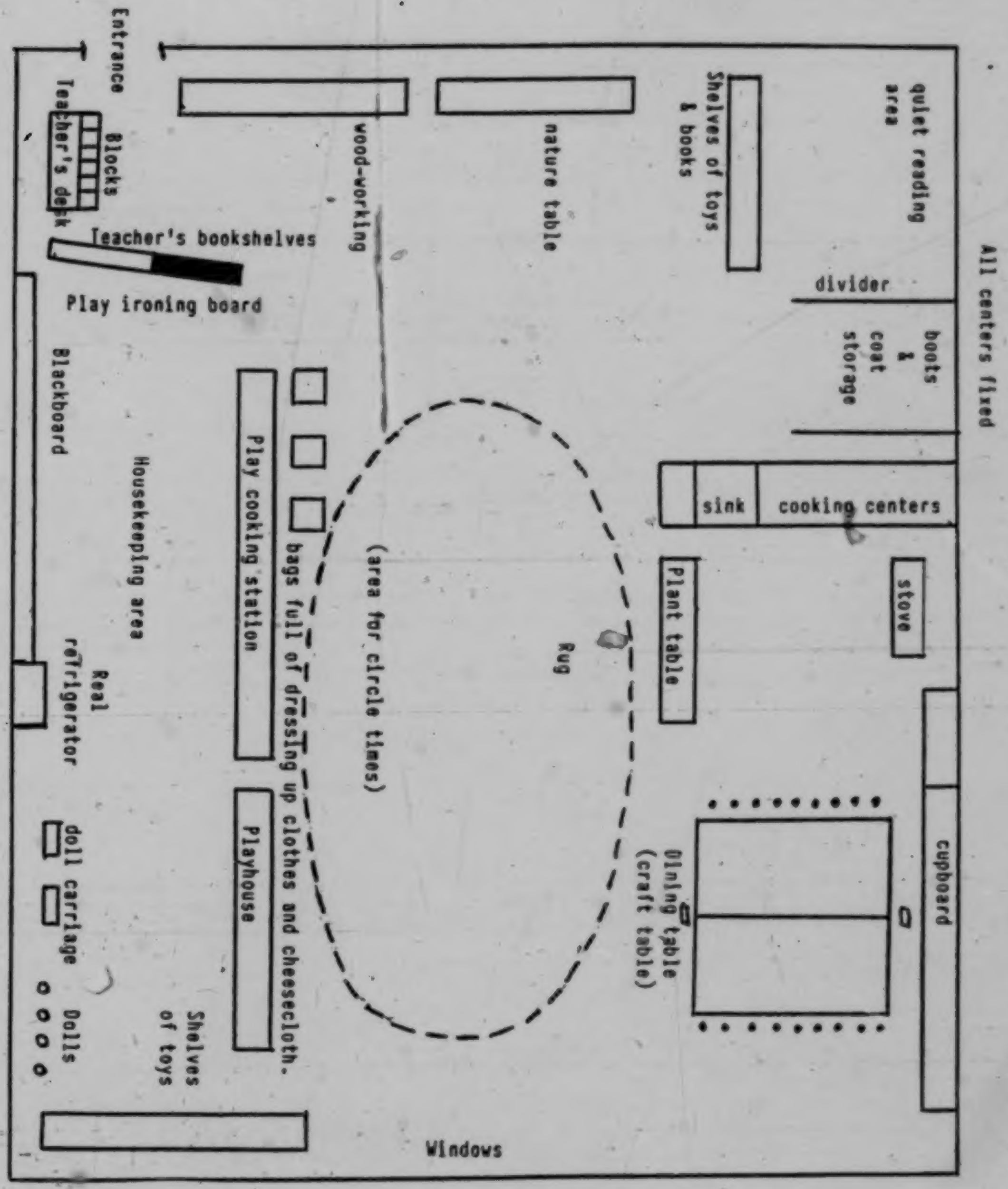
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

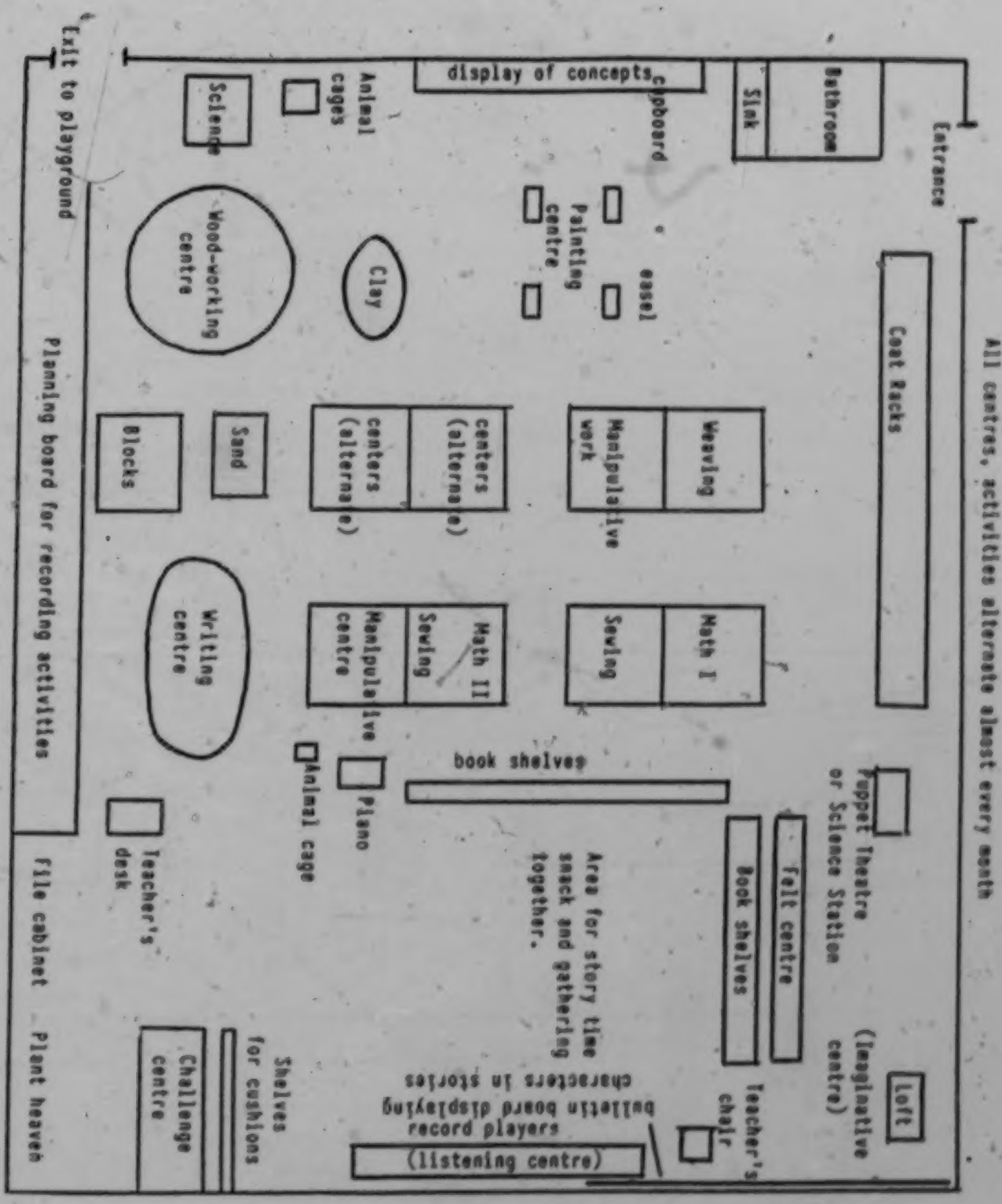
PROGRAM A FLOOR PLAN


Entrance
Teacher's desk
Blocks
wood-working
nature table
Shelves of toys & books
quiet reading area
All centers fixed
Teacher's bookshelves
Play ironing board
divider
boots & coat storage
Blackboard
Housekeeping area
Play cooking station
bags full of dressing up clothes and cheesecloth.
(area for circle times)
Rug
sink
cooking centers
Plant table
stove
Real refrigerator
doll carriage
Dolls
Shelves of toys
Playhouse
Dining table (craft table)
cupboard
Windows

PROGRAM A FLOOR PLAN

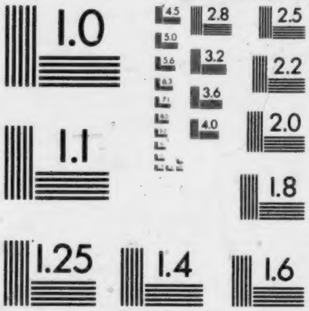
APPENDIX B

PROGRAM B FLOOR PLAN


Entrance
All centres, activities alternate almost every month
Bathroom
Sink
display of concepts
cupboard
Coat Racks
easel
Painting centre
Animal cages
Science
Exit to playground
Clay
Wood-working centre
Planning board for recording activities
Weaving
Manipulative work
Math I
Sewing
centers (alternate)
centers (alternate)
Math II
Sewing
Manipulative centre
Sand
Blocks
Writing centre
book shelves
Puppet Theatre or Science Station
(Imaginative centre)
Loft
Felt centre
Book shelves
Teacher's chair
Piano
Animal cage
Area for story time snack and gathering together.
Teacher's desk
file cabinet
Plant heaven
bulletin board displaying characters in stories
record players
(listening centre)
Shelves for cushions
Challenge centre

PROGRAM B FLOOR PLAN

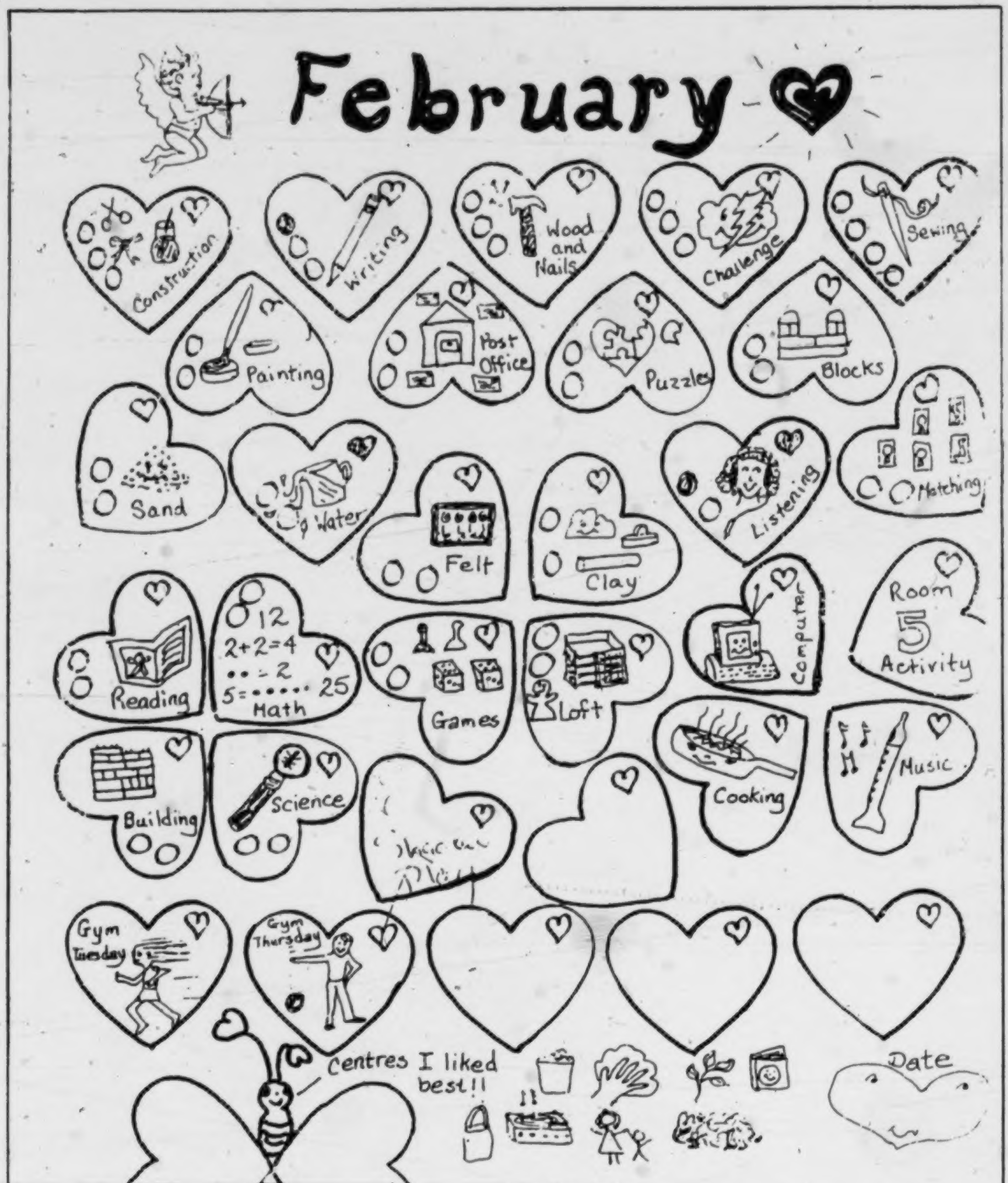
4 of/de 4


1.0
4.5
5.0
5.6
6.3
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0
2.5
2.2
2.0
1.1
1.8
1.25
1.4
1.6

PIONEERS IN METHYLENE BLUE TESTING SINCE 1974
Micro-D

APPENDIX C

PROGRAM B PLANNING SHEET


February
Construction
Writing
Wood and Nails
Challenge
Sewing
Painting
Post Office
Puzzles
Blocks
Sand
Water
Felt
Clay
Listening
Matching
Reading
12
2+2=4
•• = 2
5=•••••
25
Math
Games
Loft
Computer
Room 5 Activity
Building
Science
Cooking
Music
Gym Tuesday
Gym Thursday
Centres I liked best!!
Date
name:

PROGRAM B PLANNING SHEET

APPENDIX D

CHILDREN's REFLECTIONS

APPENDIX D

CHILDREN'S REFLECTIONS

Stimulus

1. Interview questions.

1. What is best in your kindergarten?
2. What is best about Miss A/Mrs. B?
3. What are the things you see in your classroom that you really like there?
4. Why do kids come to kindergarten?
5. What do you learn in kindergarten?
6. What could we do to make a good kindergarten?
7. What should a teacher do to make a good kindergarten teacher?

2. Direction for stimulated recall.

If you are allowed to keep five pictures from this pile, which pictures do you feel so happy when you see them and you really want to keep them?

3. Direction for children drawings

Draw a picture about what you like best in your kindergarten.

Program A

Liz

Interview

1. Doll center.
2. She is nice. Sometimes she cleans up with us.
3. The dress up.
4. Because the teacher wants to teach them.
5. Lots of things. Manners.
6. Be good. Do things for the teacher.
7. Set the table. The kindergarten table.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#11. I like flowers. I like her (the teacher) holding kid's hand.

#6. She is making Moon Boat.

#12. I like her. (Point to the aide in the photograph.)

#2. I like spinning.

#4. I like to sit near Miss A.

b. Child directed activities

#7. We are playing.

#9. We are in the castle.

#14. Micheal is knitting her basket.

#6. I want to do the puppet show.

#3. We play with the train set.

Drawing

These are two flowers and this is a pot. I like dress up. I like making c ookies with Miss A.

Wallis

Interview

1. To learn things.
2. She is nice to us, teach us things.
3. Flowers on the table, marigold; stuff like that.
4. To learn things from the teacher.
5. I don't learn things. I only learn songs. We learn what things mean. Things we don't know and then she told us.
6. I don't know.... Go to school until the end.
7. Tell us things that we don't know and what they mean. That's all I know.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#12. This - that (pointed to the teacher). We play singing game.
#3. That's Halloween. They are eating Halloween things.
#14. Because she is telling story.
#5. She is showing a plant. I have a plant like that.
#4. She is singing a song in French. She talks French.

b. Child directed activities

#13. These guys are playing water.
#16. We are painting.
#1. They are playing blocks.
#14. They are weaving the basket.
#10. The are playing the organ.

Drawing

I am playing at the doll center. These are flowers.

Jack

Interview

1. Play time, blocks.
2. Arts
3. Plants, leaves.
4. To learn lots of things.
5. To learn how to make things, to make cards.
6. Make some houses. Buy Waldorf chalk. Have lots of sand, water play and sand play
7. Thinking about making stuff. Thinking about making things, buying toys. Should have Waldorf toys, wood T.V ... Put your head down and say hello.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activity

#7. James is helping Miss A. Sometimes I helped her.
#6. It's the bunny. They are singing. You can do all the songs for them.
#2. Because Miss A is spinning.
#5. The plants are growing. You can plant plants at your school.
#1. Nick is playing. I feel happy because Jack is playing too.
b. Child directed activities
#13. I like water play. I don't like Robert.
#1. I like blocks. That's me.
#4. Because Robert is the king.
#16. Because Lory is squeezing water. I like painting too.
#7. It's kind of play time.

Drawing

This is the table with people having a party. I like party and I like going outside. I like planting seeds, singing songs, playing with blocks, putting things in my box.

Michelle

Interview

1. I like making bread in the kindrgarten.
2. When she doesn't make me help make the dough for the bread.
3. The Mother Earth cave.
4. I don't know.
5. I don't know.
6. I don't know.
7. I don't know.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#14. I like it when she sometimes plays with me.
#2. I like her when she spins.
#3. I like having snacks.
#4. I like the puppet named Micheal. She is talking in French. I like to be in French immersion program so I learn French.
#12. I like having circle time.
b. Child directed activities
#14. I like sewing.
#1. I like my mommy in the picture. At school I never have a chance to play with the blocks because there are always someone there.
#6. I like puppet show.
#3. I like the picture about my mom again. I like to play with the little truck near the cubby.
#15. There is a little bunny in it. Miss A is there.

Drawing

This is my brother. He wants me to push him. I like playing on the swing. I like watering the plants. I asked her, she always said "yes." I like playing singing games at the circle time.

Ali
Interview
1. Play, water, sand.
2. We plant with Miss A.
3. We play with kids. Dig hole outside.
4. They have to learn stuff, to swing on tire, to climb fences, monkey bars, make clay ball.
5. Circle, to write.
6. Make up songs.
7. Make snack. Plant vegetable.

Stimulated recall
a. Teacher directed activities
#9. We play in the castle.
#7. We have food.
#12 I like circle time. We are doing singing game.
#5. We have plants.
#11. Miss A is holding Michelle's hand.
b. Child directed activities
#9. We are playing store.
#7. We run in the park.
#1. I like playing with blocks.
#14. Mrs. C. (the aide) is in the picture.
#13. We are playing.

Drawing
That's me on my tiptoes. I'm reaching for a crayon.

Kate
Interview
1. Coloring
2. When she doesn't get mad.
3. The books.
4. To learn things.
5. How to draw nice; clean up.
6. Clean up and everything; have food.
7. Teacher be nice to the kids; don't treat them bad and give them food.

Stimulated recall
a. Teacher directed activities
#3. They are having snack.
#2. Miss A is spinning.
#12. It's circle time.
#1. Miss A is reading.
#6. She is making Moon Boat.
b. Child directed activity
#2. I like to water the plants.
#15. We play dress up.
#16. We are going to paint.

#14. We made Easter baskets.
#5. We are going to have snack.

Drawing

I am playing in the park with my friends.

George

Interview

1. Free time.
2. She made good snack.
3. Block. Wood work table.
4. To learn.
5. About safety rules stuff.
6. Be good. They should listen.
7. I don't know.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#10. They are making something.
#3. It looks like a birthday party.
#6. They are singing.
#9. It's story time.
#7. James is holding the bottle like a teddy bear.
b. Child directed activities
#6. That funny little puppet.
#14. I like doing weaving.
#3. I like to play with the train set.
#11. It looks neat.
#9. It's play time.

Drawing

That is teacher looking on while I am working at wood work table.

Nick

Interview

1. I like Waldorf play.
2. She does nice things. She's not noisy.
3. I like blocks and spaceships.
4. To learn.
5. I learn words.
6. Have books.
7. Read stories.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#3. She is giving us food.
#5. We have plants.
#14. She is reading.
#9. We are in the castle.
#12. We are having singing games.
b. Child directed activities
#1. I am playing space ship.
#5. It's snack time.
#9. I like playing store.

#3. I like the train set.

Drawing

I like playing blocks. These are blocks. I like the doll center. I like to go to the park. Run to the park. I can jump over the fence.

Sara

Interview

#1. Nothing is good in my kindergarten.
#2. I don't know.
#3. The doll center.
#4. I don't know.
#5. I don't know.
#6. I don't know.
#7. Give food to the kids.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#9. We play in the castle.
#11. Miss A is talking to the kid.
#12. We are singing.
#5. We plant.
#2. She spins.

Child directed activities
#15. I am in the doll center with my friends.
#14. I like making basket. I like Mrs.C (The aide).
#2. The plant is big now.
#13. They are playing.
#7. We play in the park.

Drawing

This is the sink. This is me. I am going to water the plant.

Robert

Interview

1. Gust and Shela. (The child's stuffed animals which he often brought to school.)
2. Nothing.
3. Playing; happy kids.
4. To help.
5. Nothing. Maybe, the order of the days.
6. I don't know. Trying to be as good as they can.
7. Pick fruit. Planting whole bunch of plants and transplant things.

Stimulated recall

Teacher directed activities
#11. Flowers are growing.
#7. We have food.
#5. We have nice clothes and flowers are growing.
#12. We have balloons and lots of snowflakes. I did that one.
#6. We are singing at the center.

Child directed activities
#12. We make basket.
#4. We play.
#1. We know how to play space ships. I am glad because Nick is playing too.
#15.We take teddy bear to the blocks.
we can build high chair on the blocks.
#13.I like water play.

Drawing

Gus found a trasure. His guardian angle is guarding him. And then Gus trapped a fairy who gave him the wishes.

Isabel

Interview
1. Play. The doll center.
2. She talks nice to us.
3. Blocks, dolls, books.
4. Mommy wants them to.
5. Singing, reading, playing.
6. Help Miss A.
7. Making butterfly.

Stimulated recall

Teacher directed activities
#4. I like the French puppet. I like french.
#2. I like doing the spinning wheel.
#12.I like Miss A putting the balloons up.
I like singing games.
#3. I like eating snack.
#1. They are doing eurhythmy.

Child directed activities
#3. I like the train set.
#5. I like snack.
#14. I like Mrs.C. (the aide) I like sewing.
#1. I like playing the blocks.
#15. I like the doll center.

Drawing

This is me on the slide. I like spraying the plants and I like playing at the doll center. I like playing with blocks and I like cleaning up and I like reading story.

Shelly

Shelly refused to answer any questions given in the interview and refused to give verbal responses to the photographs which she chose in the stimulated recall by saying, "I don't want to talk about it.".

Stimulated recall

Teacher directed activities
#5.
#3.
#7
#12

#1

Child directed activities

#3.

#15

#6

#14

#8

Drawing

This is shelly watering plants. I like the train set.

Mail

Mail answered only the first two questions in the interview and kept saying that he was too busy to answer the rest.

Interview

1. Robert. (A child in this class)
2. Her skirt.

Stimulated recall

Mail looked at all photographs attentively but refused to choose none as his favorite. He said he liked them all.

Drawing

This is the house and this is me building with blocks, playing the king of gnomes.

James

Interview

1. Blocks.
2. Songs.
3. Toys, sand, water and plants.
4. To learn.
5. Good things.
6. Get slides, monkey bars, bricks for making school, buy some books, toys and get some grass.
7. Sing songs and give them food.

Teacher directed activities

#3. The spinning wheel.

#7. I was helping Miss A.

#9. It was story time.

#3. I like snack.

#14.That's me.

Child directed activities

#1. They were building high chair.

#13. I like water play.

#2. We have lots of plants.

#5. It's snack time.

#7. I like playing in the park.

Drawing

This is me playing with the blocks. We built spaceships and castles.

Program B

Linda

Interview

1. Editing. You get to copy stuff.
2. She is nice. She is not mean and she is pretty.
3. Pictures - the ones Miss B drew.
4. To learn.
5. Reading, a little bit of math.
6. Good teachers. Kids clean up their mess.
7. Be nice to kids. Be good to kids. Read stories. Make things such as puppets.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#1. This is the whole class. She is reading the Secret Garden.

#11.Because she is reading Charlotte's Web. There is a map and that's all.

#4. The teacher is there and three kids and they are getting tested by the teacher.

#12.She is putting the mask on the kid.

#2. She is going to read the story.

b. Child directed activities

#10.Mary is there. She has finished her picture that she had to do.

#1. It's the cultural day. The dance is kind of funny.

#5. Garnet is wearing Wilber's snort, whatever. I play the Secret Garden on that loft.

#14.We are sitting in a circle and there's no noise and that's all.

Drawing

It's a picture about the Secret Garden. The birds are flying and the flowers are growing.

Joan

Interview

1. Reading by myself. Sometimes I just look at books and that they are fun.
2. She reads us stories and she is nice and she teaches us good. She reads good a lot.
3. The things up in the air. The ones that hang up over the center.
4. To learn how to read and grow up good and be nice.
5. To learn how to grow up good and that.
6. To learn about books and animals and that you learn *how to make pencils. She showed how to make them.*
7. Teach a lot. They write words for us to read and that.

Stimulated recall

A. Teacher directed activities

#3. I like the buffalos and bears and white deer and the porcupines and this I like Water Ship Down.
#14. We were doing puzzles. Roland has been helping and Susan asked us to clean up.
#4. I like the way they are doing those things.
#3. I like the map. I like Mrs. B's hand writing and the blanket on the chair, the robin, the magpie.
#10. Susan is showing how to paint, to fill in the picture.
B. Child directed activities
#1. It's Roland's cultural day and Lynn is in the circle. He wanted to show us. Then we can hold stuff and that.
#11. We have got to see the chicks. I wasn't there that day.
#3. I like Garnet's writing. I like Ann's picture and I like Marlene's writing.
#14. We are in a circle because there is an animal. We go in a circle so that the animal can walk around.
#2. Ann and Darcy are writing. Ann and Darcy are smiling. Darcy is nice in the picture. It's fun writing.

Drawing

Once there was a rainbow almost on the school. All of a sudden came a happy face in a rabbit and a sad face on a butterfly. I like to sew.

Candy
Interview

1. The teacher reads stories and puzzles and work like test and go to center.
2. She is a nice teacher. She reads the book every time. She helps us cook and she writes us stories. We love her. She is doing some work for us.
3. The robin. The bird that is up the piano.
4. To learn about grade one and stories.
5. To learn how to read. To learn how to work, like test and reading.
6. To be quiet.
7. Read stories. Teach us about tests.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#3. All the kids are sitting down and the roses are on the wall. The record player is on and the birds are up. She is doing decorating.
#4. She is testing the Carrots.
#12. She is putting the masks on the kids.
#9. I like Fiber and Bigwig and telling story.
#8. She is asking someone about the story. All the

kids are looking at someone.

b. Child directed activities

#2. Ann is writing in her book and Darcy is too. She is drawing a picture in her book and Charlie Brown is up on the wall.

#9. It's Carl. Every time he made things he put his things on his fingers. When I made things, other friends came along to help me. Also some friends came along to make things.

#11. It's recess time and the chicks are out.

#15. Jeff is painting and Linda is making something.

Drawing

This is a secret garden and the bird is sitting in the tree. Mary was watching ove the wall watching the chicks come out. Mary had to go in for dinner.

Tony

Interview

1. Stories.
2. She reads us stories.
3. Sewing.
4. So you can go to grade one.
5. To be good do that you can go to grade one and to play.
6. Be good and listen to the teacher.
7. Teachers be good to kids. help us do things.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#7. She is reading a book to us.

#9. They are listening to the teacher very nicely.

#11. Wilbur and Charlotte and Templeton.

#13. I like octopus and Greg and Mrs. B is reading.

#12. I like the puppet that they are pulled upon.

b. Child directed activities

#11. I like the chicks and I like Carl.

#10. They are making things.

#5. Roland is acting a pig.

#2. ~~I~~ I like Ann and Darcy at the table. Do you know how to write?

#1. It's Roland's cultural day.

Drawing

That's about the Secret Garden. Mary likes to play in there and there was a butterfly flying.

Holly

1. Blocks, writing and sand.
2. Her long hair, her clothes. She reads Secret Garden.
3. Movies. Glue bottles because they stick.
4. To learn.
5. To do number and homework. They are always in the

center and I write a note to my mom.
6. Food, water, health and be quiet.
7. Work after school. They painted up things new. Keep us quiet. Sometimes she gets angry because we are not quiet.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#3. She is doing a five. I like math.
#8. She is reading a story of Water Ship Down. They don't have the Secret Garden Stuff here.
#11. Mrs. B is reading Charlotte's Web and all the class listen when she reads story.
#9. Susan and Mrs. B is sitting with the children and teach them stuff.
#14. I like the numbers, Care Bears, Charlie Brown and the ducks. She is telling all the octopus.
b. Child directed activities
#1. That's Roland's cultural day. They talked about Scotland and I like the music. His parents came from Scotland.
#3. I like how they are smiling. I like the picture of a bird.
#4. He is writing on a sheet. We need to go to the center.
#5. It's Garnet pretending to be Wilbur.
#15. Sometimes, Carl painted some of my pictures.

Drawing

Everybody is inside while the sun shines and it's windy ooutside. No one comes out 'cause it's too windy. When the wind blows the sun shines brighter and brighter.

Nina

1. Blocks, painting and water.
2. Plants. Let me go to centers.
3. Books.
4. To have fun and read books.
5. Painting and blocks.
6. Be quiet. Don't push. Don't read book when she is reading.
7. Be nice to us. Read Secret Garden because the key is burried and crossed off with an X.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#2. Roland is sitting on his chair by Mrs. B. He is sitting close to her.
#4. Someone is doing testing.
#7. Mrs. D is reading to us. I like her and the book.
#9. Susan is doing the game about Water Ship Down. Mrs. B is showing the picture of the book.
#12. Mrs. B is playing on spider on someone's head. Mrs. B is counting the arms of the spider.

b. Child directed activities
#3. They are writing a note.
#14. We are sittng in a circle and there is no noise. That's all.
#7. I like that book and Ann.
#12. Carl is in the picture and sewing.
#11. The chicks are walking outside and mary and Carl and the chicks are walking and Roland is standing watching them. That's all.

Drawing

This is Mrs. B telling us the story outside and it's windy.

Rachelle

Interview

1. Centers and reading.
2. She is nice when she does story.
3. Pictures. I like the one Mrs. B made.
4. So that they can read.
5. How to read and how to write.
6-7. I don't know.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#1. I stand up. Teacher is saying something to kids.
#3. Chad looks funny. She is tracing. It's fun.
#2. The tulips are pretty. She is telling Roland something.
#12. Jane has got Charlotte on her head.
#13. I like Nina look funny.
b. Child directed activities
#7. Linda is showing us a book.
#11. I can see little chicks, baby chicks.
#14. I like that puzzle and octopus.
#5. Roland is acting a pig.
#12. Carl is sewing and flowers.

Drawing

I saw a rainbow and I saw some flowers and I was smelling the flowers. That's smells good. I saw some balloons flying. I was trying to catch one.

Garnet

Interview

1. Center, Wood'n Nail and water.
2. She has got beautiful hair. She reads us stories. She lets us go for recess.
3. The painting. The ones that the cildren made.
4. To learn how to read.
5. To learn how to read. Make stuff like flowers.
6. Put some grade one stuff in it. It looks prettier that way.
7. Learn how to skip. Let's have recess and have fun

in the centers.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#2. I like Roland laughing on Mrs. B's chair. Mrs.B is telling him to sit down.

#13.I can see her hair real close and Holly has a cast on.

#14.The number is on the wall. That's all.

#4. She is giving testing.

#11.The hair is short this side because she is pulling it to one side and Joan is putting up her hand.

b. Child directed activities

#5. I like me.

#14.It looks like someone's cultural day.

#9. Carl has black stuff there. I like Wood'n Nail.

#9. The people are working nicely there and they are making something.

#14. The chicks are out.

Drawing

I like charlotte's Web. This is Charlotte catching a bug. She is going t o eat it. Wilbur is sad but Charlotte is his friend.

Mike

Interview

1. Story and centers. I like construction.
2. She doesn't yell at us. She is nice. She helps us do things.
3. The pictures on the door (the pictures drawn by the children).
4. To learn.
5. Making things.
6 Have Mrs. B.
7. Teach manners.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#10.Susan is painting. I like her and she is making nice picture.

#9. Mrs. B is showing us picture about Water Ship Down and Susan is showing us the pictures.

#13.Mrs. B is telling us story.

#1. She is reading story.

#3. We are doing center and also we are doing calendar.

b. Child directed activities

#14.They are sitting in a circle. It's fun.

#11.I like the chicks and Mary and Carl.

#2. I like this one because they are writing.

#12.I like Carl sewing. I like Carl.

#15.Jeff is painting,and Linda is painting, Making something.

Drawing

Did not participate due to illness.

Nancy

Interview

1. I like to play in centers.
2. She reads stories to us.
3. Stories and pictures about stories on the board.
4. They had to go to school. It's fun in school.
5. Singing, ceneters.
6. We can be friends. We can play with each other. We can play with our friends.
7. She teaches us. We can go singing.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#10.I like the painting.

#4. I like what the carrot is doing. I did good testing today.

#9. I like the story. Some of them are looking You know what? Charlotte died in the story.

#2. Because she is going to kiss Roland. He is going to sit on the rug. Every time my mom hits me.

#11.I like Mrs. B doing her head back. I like the picture too. We had a puzzle of this girl. She is holding the bottle.

b. Child directed activities

#10.This is clay. we do something with the clay. Look at Chad! Look at waht he is doing with pencil.

#9. Look at Carl. He is making Catepillar.

#1. I like Roland 's cultural day. Every time I like it. I like what they bring to eat.

#11.I like the chiks. Some of them died. Some of them live in the new house.

#3. I like the writing, the spelling too. This is our nice spelling too.

Drawing

I draw you here. That's the children in bed. I like all the centers.

Marlene

Interview

1. I like being in construction
2. Because she pulled my teeth out. I like her because she reads us stories.
3. I like the painting that the people do.
4. To learn stuff.
5. How to read; to do homework. They do in grade one.
6. To learn to do a lot of things and not to fight.
7. Not to yell at kids. To do her work what she is

told to do.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#11. I like Mrs. B making a face like that. They are going to listen to the story. Where do you come from? If you live in Africa, you have to go with your parents otherwise you will be eaten. I came from Germany.

#10. I like Susan's face. She is painting.

#12. Because the spider. The girl is Nina. She said, Don't pull out these head. They will be peeled off. She wanted to keep it until the last day.

#2. Mrs. B wanted to kiss that boy. Most of the time when she kissed us we say,"Shame, shame, double shame. Now I know your boyfriend's name.". She kissed sometime because she likes them.

#4. Her face looked funny. They are having their tests from Mrs. B and I like it. I had my test too I had test to get smart.

b. Child directed activities

#14. because this little boy looks funny. It's someone's cultural day. That's why they sit in a circle.

#9. This one looks funny because he colored his hands he is doing something in construction.

#11. I like the chicky. This little girl is trying to catch the chicks.

#5. Garnet is acting a pig. This is a unicorn and that's Greg.

#2. I like the picture. They are smiling and writing.

Drawing

Once upon a time, it was raining and then the sun went out then the butterfly came and then came the rainbow. Then came people outside to play and some went for a walk out in the wet.

Eric

Interview

1. Centers. I like construction and blocks.
2. She teaches us how to read.
3. Plants. Things hang from the ceiling.
4. To learn.
5. To read, to learn to count, to do alphabet.
6. Help our teahers and we could help them do stuff like clean up.
7. Teach us nice.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#12. I like when she made the costume for us and she buys nice things for the classroom and she buys us nice things to make the classroom pretty and

things that make the ceiling look pretty.
#14.They got songs and this is the center.
#1. I like she helps us learn and I like her help us know how to read and know birds we don't know and new animals.
#3. We learn numbers and learn how to write numbers and learn how to do heart puzzle and learn how to spell.
#4. She learns how to do special things. We learn how to do the test. I like testing.
b. Child directed activities
#1. It's cultural day. I like to have kinds of food and learn about stuff they tell us.
#12.I like doing sewing and I like to go to centers.
#2. I like drawing pictures and I like to learn how to print.
#13.I like to play with sand and I like to go to center.
#11.I like to play with the chicks and I like to go out for recess.

Drawing

It 's me playing with the blocks. It is the butterfly looking at the heart. There is a sun and the little girl is looking at the sun.

Jane
Interviw

1. I like my teacher.
2. Very nice. She teaches kids lots of things.
3. The paintings that the kids have been doing.
4. To learn.
5. How to read.
6. Put nice decoration on it.
7. Be nice to the kids. Say nice things.

Stimulated Recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#10.I like the picture that Susan is painting. I like what she is painting.
#6. They are doing art project.
#7. Mrs. D (The librarian) is smiling.
#4. They are doing good work, testing.
#8. She is reading a story.
b. Child directed activities
#12.I like his smile. He is cute. He is weaving. I thought it was a farm.
#11.I think chicky is cute.
#10.I like Mary smiling. I like the job they have been doing.
#2. I like Ann's and Darcy's smile and I like their work.
#3. I like the things they have been doing. A little

starlike decorative and I see a heart with the arrow.

Drawing

One day there is a diamond. It was very foggy. The stars, different colour stars, and there was a bird and there was a spider web on the corner. There was an arrow stuck inside. There were dots and I was lost and I couldn't find my Mom; so I found the diamond and I saw a bird. I saw some stars and the arrow in the middle and I saw some dots.

karl

interview

1. Centers: loft and construction.
2. She teaches us nice and she is nice, very nice. She plays with us a lot of time. She played Duck Duck Goose.
3. My friends. They play with me a lot of times. And loft and the puppet theatre. You know Charlotte's Web- the pig. I like the pig costume and the lamb and I even like the mice.
4. To get some notes and to learn how to read.
5. We play with friends when it's time to play.
6. Let's kids play a lot and be friends with kids.
7. Teach how to read.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#5. I think it's fun to learn how to count.

#2. It makes you know how to raise your hand.

#12.You get to know how to put on puppet.

#9. I like Big Wig. That's Roland, my friend.

#11.I like Charlotte's Web.

b. Child directed activities

#12.I like sewing.

#11. I like playing outside.

#2. I like construction.

#6. I like challenge.

#8. I like putting farm animals together.

Drawing

Secret Garden. That's all.

Ann

Interview

1. I like the centers. I like challenge. I got two of them.
2. She's got long hair and she look nice. She's got nice clothes.
3. I like the things we do in the classroom.
4. To learn.
5. To read. The teacher helps us learn how to cook.

That's all I can think of.
6. The teacher, the pictures in the hall way, (the children's art work) the library, classroom and school work.
7. Read us stories.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#4. It's nice. I like it because they are having a test.
#2. This one I don't know what he is doing. he is doing something with the teacher.
#8. Becuse Nina came back. She is pointing to someone.
#3. I like it because she is showing how to do the five and I don't know how. She goes this way and around.
#13. I like to see her back. They are looking at the teacher.

b. Child directed activities

#12. Cori is sewing.
#8. They are playing at the farm.
#1. I like how we get some food.
#10. I like clay.
#9. He got dirty fingers.

Drawing

I was under a butterfly and I didn't see it. A boy was outside and I picked it up and someone said, "That's my box.".

Carl

Interview

1. I like how we learn. Mrs. B teaches us.
2. I like how she reads.
3. The pictures on the doors, loft.
4. To learn.
5. How to do whatever-- I have five fingers and I took one off. That makes four.
6. I don't know.
7. Treat us nice. Help us when we have trouble. Talk to us nice.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#7. I like the picture in the book.
#4. I like how they are doing the test.
#3. I like how she is doing number five.
#12. I like how Jane worked to be Charlotte.
#11. I like how they are raising their hands.

b. Child directed activities

#1. I like cultural day.

#14.I like how we sit in a circle nicely.
#2. I like how they do their writing.
#12.I like how I am sewing.
#11.I like how the chicks are moving around.

Drawing

This is a picture of loft. You know what story in it? The story of The Wizard of Oz. That's the yellow brick road.

Greg

Interview

1. Making pictures for parents.
2. She teaches stuff about birds.
3. Chickens.
4. To learn things.
5. Birds and stuff.
6. I can't tell.
7. I can't tell.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#4. Rob is studying. Thinking hard. She is giving them a test.
#6. We are making projects.
#8. Because it shows me. We are listening to Mrs.C.
#9. She is playing the spoon.
#12.Somebody put on the spider mask.
b. Child directed activities
#10.They are making birds.
#11.The chicks are here.
#1. We are tasting the food in Roland's cultural day.
#3. John is drawing pictures to Mrs. Young. (The owner of the farm.)
#7. She is showing a book.

Drawing

Mrs. C is reading a story about the Secret Garden to the kids.

Dane

Interview

1. I like all centers.
2. She made a lot of things for us and she teaches us.
3. I think I like loft and playing with my friends.
4. They will have fun and learn to do numbers and a lot of things.
5. I learn how t read and write stories.
6. Let kids play a lot and help them learn.
7. Read stories and make the kids quiet.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#3. Mrs. B is writing. She is trying to do her five

nicely.

#12.Mrs. B wanted us to be careful with the legs she showed us how to put the mask on.

#13.I like the way we listen carefully and Mrs. B's hair is real nice and Holly had a cast on.

#1. I like all stories Mrs. B read to us. I like her pictures too.

#5. I like Susie the Snake and I like the octopus and the calendar is neat.

b. Child directed activities

#5. I like Garnet's nose and it looks like a pig's nose and I like this horse and I like the mirror and the spider and the mirror on the loft. You make up costumes in the loft. We like this school to be clean up.

#7. Lori is pretending that she is a teacher and we were listening to her and Lori pretended that she wanted us to know about animals.

#12.I like it when I can sew it. Carl, when he sews, he always starts it faster than us. Carl does things for us.

#15.I like it when I paint and fill up the space nicely.

#11.Mary, Jane and Carl are trying to catch the chicks. Some of the chicks died and we took them to live in the farm already.

Drawing

This is the Secret Garden full of flowers and trees. The birds are flying and the wind is blowing. The sun is shining brightly and the rainbow is there .

Mary

Interview

1. Loft.
2. Her shoes and dresses.
3. Carpets; Susan (The aide).
4. It's a lot of fun.
5. Very important. Look both ways. Be careful on cars.
6. Have a play kindergarten with Barby. Lots of love to everyone else.
7. Learn kids. Teacher loves children and everybody loves everybody else. Teach me about danger.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#12.Mrs. B is there. I see Charlotte.

#4. She is testing the Carrots.

#11.She is exercising with the children.

#3. She is teaching the kids.

#9. I see my boy friend here. His name is Big Wig. She is reading a book.

b. Child directed activities

#9. I see Carl. There is colour on his hand.
#16.I like Wood'n Nail.
#12.I like Carl doing sewing.
#2. I like the writing center, crayon and everything.
#14.I like Carl here. They are sitting around.

Drawing

Wendy let go off Peter's hand. Then she fell on a rock. Then Peter saved her. Then she asked a butterfly.

Rob

Interview

1. Loft.
2. Her hair because it's long, very nice. I like her.
3. I think I like science. It's sort of fun.
4. Because I like kindergarten.
5. Lots of stuff. How to read. How to draw.
6. Be nice. Love people and be nice to people.
7. Teach good. Read a story.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#4. Because she is giving testing.
#3. Because she is writing and I like the map.
#9. Because there is a map here and Fiber and Hazel and she is reading story.
#12.She said we should be careful with the legs. She made a mask puppet and that's Wilbur.
#8. Greg and Tony and me. She is saying, "It's Easter time. Hunt for Easter Cookies.".

b. Child directed activities
#4. Sign in Rob, because if we don't sign in, we don't know what center we will be. We should have a sign in sheet and a sign in pencil.
#13.I like sand. I can make any building, tower, castle, anything.
#11.I like Mary, Jane and Carl. We are trying to catch the chicks. My Mom likes killing chicks eggs because she is mean.
#1. I love the food they bring. They talk about different countries.
#5. I like Garnet climbing up and the unicorn.

Drawing

This is a picture of the Secret Garden. Here is the door and the key hole . The key is burried here and there is the mark for the burried treasure. I'm not going to tell you. My picture is secret.

Lynn

Interview

1. Centers.
2. When she reads stories.
3. The teacher.

4. To learn.
5. Making projects.
6. Be nice to kids. Read stories.
7. Teacher read stories.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#4. She is testing the kids.
#3. She is showing how to do number five.
#12. She is showing how things look on people.
#1. She is reading story.
#2. I really don't know.
b. Child directed activities
#7. Linda is showing things from the book.
#11. Chicks are outside.
#4. People are crossing off the centers.
#8. I like those animals at the farm.
#1. It looks like someone's cultural day.

Drawing

Mrs. B is reading us the story of the Secret Garden. Mrs. B is sitting in her chair reading us the story.

Roland

Interview

1. Centers, loft.
2. Read stories.
3. Centers, calendar, blocks, wood and nails.
4. To learn things.
5. Birds.
6. Teacher reads stories.
7. Be nice. make centers. making activities for you.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities
#11. That's Mrs. B so nicely dressed up.
#4. I like Mrs. B, her long hair. She is testing the Carrot group.
#12. Wilbur and peach crayon. Teacher tells us about Charlotte.
#2. Mrs. B let me sit on her chair with her.
#3. Mrs. B is making something for us. I like to trace over something.
b. Child directed activities
#5. My friend is there and the pig is there.
#11. Wood'n Nail I like. That's why.
#9. I like construction.
#3. My friend is there and the pig is there.
#11. The chicks I love.

Drawing

I am playing in loft. A snake, Susie. It's the Secret Garden.

Darcy

Interview

1. Writing and challenge.
2. She helps us learn many things and make things for us.
3. Mrs. B, my friends and all the centers.
4. To learn how to go to grade one.
5. I learn how to grow up good.
6. Have good teacher and let kids have fun in centers.
7. Read stories and play with kids.

Stimulated recall

a. Teacher directed activities

#3. I like the glass on Chad. I like the chickadee and the roses, the maps. You like seeing Mrs. B making numbers?

#4. I like the testing. It was fun. I like the puzzle here. I like the pink on the chair.

#1. I like the story, Secret Garden. I like Mrs. B's dress. I like Joan's dress. I like her rose. I like her magpie and I like the picture in the story.

#5. I like Susan's jacket, Susie the Snake and the calendar board.

#13. I can see my friends listen to Mrs.B when she read story.

b. Child directed activities

#1. I like Roland's cultural day. I like the snack. I like Roland's bread. I like the cup that he brings. I like what Roland is wearing, the Micky Mouse shirt.

#6. Jane is standing on something. Ann is writing something. Joan is writing. I like challenge.

#2. I like Ann's writing. Ann likes my picture. I like this bird. Ann is cute.

#11. Mary and Jane are catching that chick. Jane is trying to hold it. Garnet is looking at the chicks.

#14. I like nancy's dress. It's someone cultural day. Sometimes they bring funny things on cultural days. I like Lynn's barette here. Challenge is fun. I like this octopus. It looks like it's funny. I like to sign out books. I like their flowers, the white roses. I like Carl's blouse.

Drawing

I like the writing center. I like to write pictures and stories. Once there was a butterfly and it's almost close to the rainbow. The butterfly is ging to eat the flowers.